



Strategic Recruitment and Onboarding-Moving Beyond One-Size-Fits-All Workforce Practices

LeadingAge[®] MN
FOUNDATION

THANK YOU TO...

The **LeadingAge Minnesota Foundation (LAMF)** who is proud to lead this work, on behalf of our LeadingAge Minnesota members.

The **Employer Voices Advisory Council** and **Immigrant Voices Advisory Council** — comprised of LAMN members and partners.

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Strategic Recruitment and Onboarding-Moving Beyond One-Size-Fits-All Workforce Practices

This training will teach leaders, managers, directors, and recruitment specialists how to differentiate recruitment, onboarding, and training practices to better support immigrant and multilingual employees.

Learn how to improve job descriptions, digital outreach, interview practices, and onboarding approaches to reduce turnover and strengthen workforce retention.

Focused topics include:

- Differentiating Recruitment Strategies
- Differentiating Onboarding Strategies

All statistics displayed in this presentation were retrieved from the LAMF Employer Guide

Presenter Introductions



Najma Abdille (Workforce Specialist) – Alight



Stacy Barnes (Co-Director) – Alight



Kirstan Ketter (Foundation Project Manager) – LeadingAge Minnesota Foundation



Gladys Kumenda-Jassam (HR Manager) – PHS



Joshua Orenge (DON) – Trillium Woods

WIDA Reading Levels

Level	Proficiency
1	Beginning to acquire English, uses basic words, very simple phrases
2	Produce simple sentences, relies heavily on context, struggles with long paragraphs or abstract information
3	Can write full sentences, understands routine tasks, read and write with some grammatical errors
4	Understand and produce most written communication, might struggle with technical language but can largely participate



Kirstan Ketter (Foundation Project Manager) – LeadingAge Minnesota Foundation

WIDA Levels Comparison: Therapeutic Recreation Aide

Section	Level 1 (Entering)	Level 2 (Emerging)	Level 3 (Developing)
Job Title	Job: Activity Helper	Job: Therapeutic Recreation Aide	Job Title: Therapeutic Recreation Aide
Pay	\$17.59–\$20.56 per hour	Same	Same
Schedule	Short, simple list	Simple sentences with times	Full labeled schedule
Benefits	Very short phrases “Free insurance” “Paid vacation”	Short phrases with more detail “Free medical insurance (single)”	More formal terms “401(k) retirement plan with company match”
Job Summary	- Help with activities - Work with director - Help residents	- Help plan and lead activities - Work with director - Encourage residents	- Support director in delivering programming - Activities based on care plans, interests, abilities
Activities	“Do group and one-on-one activities”	“Lead group and individual activities”	“Plan and facilitate group and individual activities”
Residents	“Help residents”	“Encourage residents to join”	“Encourage engagement and participation”
Relationships	“Talk to residents”	“Build relationships with residents and families”	“Build positive relationships using interpersonal skills”
Other Duties	- Help move residents - Write notes	- Help transport residents - Write simple notes	- Assist with transportation and events - Document participation and progress
Rules	“Follow safety rules”	“Follow safety and health rules”	“Follow safety, infection control, and HIPAA guidelines”
Qualifications	- Like older people - Be kind - Speak English	- Enjoy working with older adults - Communicate clearly	- Strong interpersonal skills - Ability to multitask and adapt
Experience	“Experience is good”	“Experience is helpful”	“Experience is preferred but not required”
Company Info	“Company helps people”	“Company provides care in Minnesota”	“Provides short-term rehab and long-term care; partners with organizations”

Job Posting Example Provided by Alight

Improving Interview Techniques

For New Americans, the traditional format can create unnecessary barriers. Small adaptations can make interviews more welcoming and equitable.

- Bridge language gaps by inviting employees fluent in the applicant's native language
- Split the interview into technical and soft skills to allow for time to understand each other
- Watch for cultural differences when interviewing (not making eye contact, minimal hand shaking, etc.) and be sensitive to cultural norms
- Listen for answers of confidence and allow the interview to navigate in directions not planned for – this allows the applicant to open up on their own time
- Compare career pathways and ensure the applicant is looking for the role the employer is hiring, either now or in the future



Gladys Kumenda-Jassam
(HR Manager) – PHS

LAMF's Employer Guide

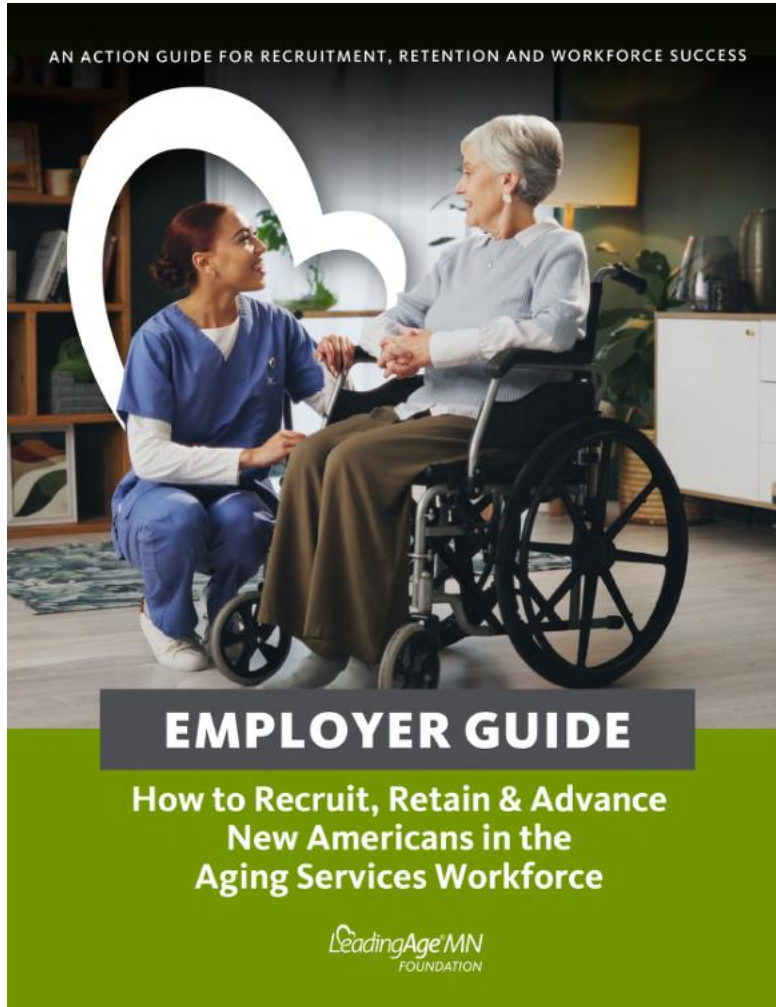


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TOOLS & TEMPLATES

- ▶ **Section 3 Tools:** Partner & Prepare
- ▶ **Section 4 Tools:** Recruit & Hire
- ▶ **Section 5 Tools:** Welcome & Onboard
- ▶ **Section 6 Tools:** Educate & Retain

How to Use AI to Write Better Job Descriptions for English Language Learners

SECTION 4 TOOLS: RECRUIT & HIRE

Overview: This tool provides practical guidance on using generative AI tools (such as ChatGPT) to create clearer, more inclusive job descriptions and postings. By using plain language and an accessible tone, employers can expand their candidate pool, support English language learners, and help more applicants—especially New Americans—feel confident applying.

Steps for Employers:

- 1 Define the audience.**
 - English language learners
 - People reading at a 6th-grade level
 - Or first-time applicants in healthcare or senior services
- 2 Set the style.**
 - Ask for short, clear sentences with simple vocabulary (e.g., “help” instead of “assist”)
 - Active voice (“You help residents” instead of “The Resident Assistant is responsible...”)
 - Welcoming and inclusive tone (“We will train you”)
- 3 Keep what matters.**
 - Job title, duties, pay, schedule, benefits, minimum vs. preferred qualifications.
- 4 Organize for readability.**
 - Use clear headings (e.g., About the Job, What You Will Do)
 - Present duties and qualifications in bullet points
 - Avoid long paragraphs or policy jargon
- 5 Double-check for accuracy and clarity.**
 - Any AI can make mistakes, so review your results thoroughly to make sure key information is not lost.

Original JD

Summary: The Resident Assistant / Caregiver is responsible for providing personal care and delegated health-related services designed to maintain the resident’s physical, social, and emotional well-being. This position is responsible for following the service schedule for each resident and correctly documents services provided.

AI-Rewritten JD (6th Grade Reading Level)

About this job: As a Resident Assistant, you help older adults with their daily needs so they can live with comfort and dignity. You provide care, kindness, and support each day. Don’t worry if you have never done this work before — we will train you!

Business case for enhancing recruitment, onboarding, and training practices

Today's labor market looks very different. Recruitment in long-term care is costly, time-consuming, and competitive.

- The market is very competitive and there are less applicants today than in years past – new communities need to be discovered
- Due to the high cost of turnover, many organizations are looking for ways to streamline roles or limit backfill of existing positions
- All the intricacies that go into hiring an individual in aging services can dissuade some who apply – look into mentorship programs



• Joshua Orenge (DON) –
Trillium Woods

Employee Referral Program Best Practices

SECTION 4 TOOLS: RECRUIT & HIRE

- **Overview:** This tool outlines a simple, structured employee referral program that enables staff to refer friends, family, and community members for open roles. For New American employees, referrals are especially effective because trust and word of mouth within community networks play a critical role in employment decisions. A strong referral program positions employees as recruitment partners, leading to faster hiring, stronger retention, and a more stable workforce.

Example Referral Tracking Tool

Referral Name	Referral Position	New Hire Name	New Hire Position	Hire Date	Reward/Payout Date
Example Name	RN	Sample Hire	CNA	2/5/24	5/10/24

- **Employer Tips**
- **Involve employees** in shaping rewards — ask what matters to them.
 - **Promote program details** in plain language and translated formats.
 - **Pay rewards quickly** to keep trust.
 - **Highlight referral stories** to build momentum.

QR code

Logo



Employee Referral Program

IN 3 EASY STEPS



Help bring in trusted coworkers



Earn rewards and recognition



Strengthen your team

1. Refer a Friend.

Fill out the referral form or scan the QR code.

2. They're Hired.

Your referral is onboarded and completes X days.

3. You're Rewarded!

Choose your reward:
\$ amount / PTO / gift card.

Contact HR for details or to get a referral form.

Employee Referral Program Best Practices

Focus Area	Action Steps for Employers
Build a Solid Foundation	Apply rewards consistently; define excluded roles (e.g., HR); document and track referrals fairly.
Make It Easy	Use a one-page form or QR code; keep submission instructions simple; ensure payout is timely.
Offer Meaningful Rewards	Provide options (cash, PTO, gift cards, company swag, family meal vouchers). Consider culturally relevant rewards for New American staff.
Communicate Regularly	Promote in shift huddles, 1:1s, newsletters, bulletin boards. Translate program info for inclusivity.
Celebrate Success	Highlight employees who referred hires (with consent). Share stories internally to inspire others.
Track Outcomes	Monitor hires and retention. Recognize “super referrers” with extra acknowledgement.

Better onboarding saves money and improves care

Why spend more time and resources upfront?

- Turnover is expensive and should be prevented through focus on new hires
- Early loss is common—and preventable if the training is individualized
- Leaders and caregivers can see onboarding very differently depending on their role and tenure with the organization
- Onboarding takes significant time and should not be rushed
- Strong onboarding drives retention, career growth, and mutual respect
- Assist with paperwork, process questions, and be sure to check in numerous times to ensure everything is understood
- Walk individuals through the steps ... more than once ... at their speed



Gladys Kumenda-Jassam
(HR Manager) – PHS

Alight

- 50-year-old organization
- Used to be called the American Refugee Committee
- Work with new Americans from all nationalities, all walks of life
- Primarily work with individuals who have been in the country five years or less
- Contact information: (612) 872-7060, <https://www.wearealight.org/>



Stacy Barnes
(Co-Director)



Najma Abdille
(Workforce Specialist)

Alight & Employers

- Create support systems and structures
- Assist individuals with applications, resume building, and mock interviews
- Support new Americans once they accept a job offer
 - This includes completing the employer's onboarding process



Recommendations for White Glove Onboarding

- Prepare before day one
- Create a warm, welcoming start
- Simplify the administrative load
- Train in manageable phases
- Build belonging and open communication
- Create a mentorship program!



When Hiring – Focus on the Person

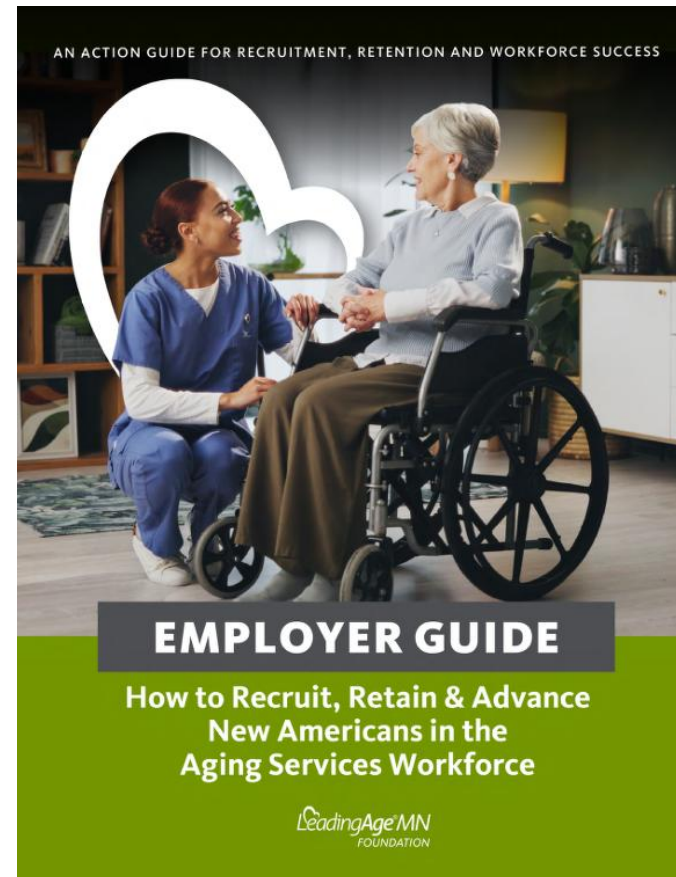
A quote from the
Employer Guide

“By embracing promising onboarding practices—like language support services, cultural competency training, and mentorship—PHS is not just welcoming New Americans; it’s unlocking their potential. These initiatives are powerful catalysts for success, and the results speak for themselves: engagement and workplace experience on par with their peers, higher retention, and glowing feedback from both employees and managers. The message is clear: investing in robust onboarding isn’t a choice, it’s the foundation for building a dynamic, high-performing workforce where everyone has the opportunity to excel.”

—Sheila Tandingan, Presbyterian Homes & Services Onboarding Manager

Let's Recap

- Learned how to differentiate recruitment, onboarding, and training practices to better support immigrant and multilingual employees.
- Discussed how to improve outreach, interview practices, and onboarding approaches to reduce turnover and strengthen workforce retention.



Thank You!