

GLOBAL TALENT: WINNING STRATEGIES FOR HIRING AND RETENTION IN A CHALLENGING IMMIGRATION ENVIRONMENT

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WHY IMMIGRATION MATTERS MORE THAN EVER IN PA

- Aging workforce in key industries (manufacturing, healthcare)
- Universities producing global talent—but retention gaps post-graduation
- Increased competition from NY, NJ, and remote-friendly employers
- Growth sectors: life sciences, healthcare systems, robotics (Pittsburgh), fintech

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THE NEW IMMIGRATION REALITY

- Increased adjudication scrutiny across visa categories
- Processing delays and inconsistent decision-making
- Heightened enforcement (I-9 audits, site visits)
- Policy shifts tied to political cycles
- Global competition for talent intensifying

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WHERE EMPLOYERS ARE STRUGGLING

- H-1B cap limitations and lottery unpredictability
- Limited work authorization pathways for early-career talent
- Retention risk due to long green card backlogs
- Compliance exposure (I-9, E-Verify, wage obligations)
- Remote work creating jurisdictional and compliance issues

Rethinking Talent Strategy



FROM REACTIVE TO STRUGGLING

- Shift from “visa sponsorship” → “talent lifecycle planning”
- Align immigration with workforce planning and business goals
- Build redundancy into hiring pipelines
- Integrate legal, HR, and business leadership early

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DIVERSIFYING THE IMMIGRATION TOOLKIT

- **L-1** (intra-company transfers for global mobility)
- **O-1** (extraordinary ability – underutilized for high performers)
- **TN / E-3** (country-specific advantages)
- **E-2** (investor/essential employee pathways)
- **Cap-exempt H-1Bs** (universities, research institutions)

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UNIVERSITIES AS TALENT PIPELINES: LEVERAGING F-1 AND OPT STRATEGICALLY

- Build relationships with key universities
- Optimize use of STEM OPT extensions
- Early identification of H-1B candidates
- Internships → full-time conversion pipelines

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GREEN CARD STRATEGY AS A RETENTION TOOL

Retention Begins with Permanent Residence

- Start early to avoid visa max-out issues
- Align PERM requirements with real job needs
- Use priority date strategy to retain long-term talent
- Communicate clearly with employees on timelines

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REMOTE WORK & GLOBAL MOBILITY: NEW RISKS IN A BORDERLESS WORKFORCE

- Employees working outside intended visa location
- Wage and Labor Condition Application (LCA) compliance exposure
- Cross-border tax and immigration risks
- Rise of “digital nomad” expectations

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RETENTION IN A COMPETITIVE MARKET: WHAT KEEPS FOREIGN TALENT

- Predictability and transparency
- Clear immigration sponsorship policies
- Timing of green card sponsorship
- Internal mobility opportunities
- Support during travel and visa issues

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BEST PRACTICES

- Immigration embedded in workforce planning
- Data-driven tracking of visa populations
- Alternative visa strategies pre-built
- Strong partnerships between HR + Legal + outside counsel
- Proactive communication with employees

IMMEDIATE NEXT STEPS

- Audit current foreign national population
- Identify visa expiration risks (next 12–24 months)
- Diversify visa strategy
- Launch or refine green card program

Questions?



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