

Tips - Turning Your 'Offshore' Status to 'Onshore'



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New Zealand boasts a coveted lifestyle with a tapestry of incredible landscapes, rich culture and a burgeoning tech sector which employed a staggering 120,000 people last year, according to a report from the New Zealand Digital Skills Forum. Software programmer jobs were especially highlighted with an 11% increase in demand annually. This heralds IT as the fastest growing and third largest proponent of our economy. Given that, it's unsurprising that Immigration NZ has placed it on the long-term skills 📄 **shortage list**, making it an attractive option for overseas talent looking for a change. With an overload of information out there, where do you start? What do you need to know? Where do you need to look? The following tips can help you start to plan your passage from an offshore candidate to an onshore one.

Opportunities Abound for Offshore Candidates

Last year New Zealand had an **annual net migration** of 70,000, with an 11% increase in those arriving on work visas. Many have prescribed to the skills-shortage list, which is updated annually. Chronic talent voids in Christchurch and throughout NZ are seen in positions such as: Systems Analysts, Software Engineers, Software and Applications Engineers, Computer Network and Systems Engineers, ICT Project Managers and ICT Quality Assurance Engineers to name a few. Before embarking on your life-changing journey, take the time to research this list as well as the advertisements on job boards to ascertain what you want and especially what you can offer. What sort of impact will your suite of skills, qualifications and experience have on a prospective employer here? Are these attributes reflected in your CV and cover letter? It may be a good idea to explore the Sourced evaluation of **Top Tech Trends** in IT at the moment. This little bit of planning will get you ahead of the game in a competitive marketplace.

With Labour in the hot seat after the election, we will see a **tech friendly government**, with grants for young start-ups and some big investments in infrastructure projects, which will trickle more revenue into the IT sector by default. The **Sourced Report** from September last year showed a clear pattern of growth in hiring due to new work and projects. In Christchurch alone 81% of employers have hired someone in the last six months. What is even more interesting is that 24% of these recruited for five or more positions. With another Sourced Report due to come out this month, we will gain an even greater insight into the patterns of growth in not only Christchurch and Canterbury, but Auckland as well.

Find the Right Person to Oversee Your Move

There is a certain amount of research and planning that you can undertake to steer your rudders the right way. However, the most important box to tick is enlisting the help and advice of a licensed immigration adviser. The New Zealand Government's **Immigration Advisers Authority** has some guidelines in ensuring your consultant is licensed and how to go about getting one.

With the aid of an immigration adviser, you can deduce which type of working visa is best suited for your circumstances as there are many and each have their own criteria for approval. The **New Zealand Immigration** website hosts a variety of useful information on the visa options available, from Skilled Migrant Visas to Temporary Visas and Residence from Work Visas.

"Only a licensed immigration adviser or a person who is exempt from licensing can give advice on New Zealand immigration matters. This applies whether the advice is direct or indirect, and whether or not the advice is paid for."

www.immigration.govt.nz

Most companies adhere to strict legislative requirements and in most cases must make an attempt to fill a vacancy locally first before seeking an offshore candidate. The silver lining here is making contact with an established recruitment company who may be able to offer some guidance whilst you're still at home. Researching the companies that you would like to work for could reap opportunities as well. Use LinkedIn or websites to gauge their culture and hiring trends.

Research Life in New Zealand

How much do you really know about 'The land of the long white cloud'? It may be all well and good revelling in the prospering IT industry, but life can't be based only on salary – can you actually live here? Is there a particular city that has piqued your interest? Search the Internet and cherry-pick anecdotes as well as testimonials from forums to see what type of lifestyle awaits you. Ask questions of people who may have at least visited before and get some candid opinions.

With **Christchurch** and Canterbury providing offshore candidates with some of the best IT roles, you may wish to read up on living here. Not only are the vistas breathtaking, but it includes an international airport, great schools and the University of Canterbury, which offers world-class courses such as Computer Science and Software Engineering. Given the average salary for an IT professional can range from \$65K for a Data Analyst to \$130k for an IT Manager, renting affordability is quite achievable with average rents advertised at \$1,600 per month. Arming yourself with this critical information will help you to make a better-informed decision.

If the grass does look greener and you've joined forces with a licensed immigration adviser, don't forget to tie up some loose ends:

- Update your **resume** with the correct style and a focus on achievements.
- Know what to expect from a Kiwi workplace and understand your employment rights.

Summary

With such an array of jobs beckoning in the tech Christchurch and tech Canterbury marketplace, and such a large volume of information to work through regarding migrating, we urge offshore candidates to go through the practical steps first to ensure the best chance for success. When it comes to the crunch a licensed immigration adviser is the only one who can give proper, detailed, legal information on the process of migration. After that, feel free to **get in touch** with the team here at Sourced to discuss making your next career move count.