



EDUCATION TIMES

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Career Development Centre: Strategizing to meet Australian migration development

A decade of continuous operations with a growing success rate in a trade such as migration consultancy is no meager task. It is a statement of how a business establishment can successfully develop its strategies to move with the dynamics involved in its field.

The Career Development Centre (Pvt) Ltd, (CDC) is an organization whose track record speaks of its competency and credibility. And it can aptly be called a leader in its arena.

An interview conducted with its proprietor and senior consultant Unee Samantha Pathirage, a bold and enterprising female entrepreneur, revealed what CDC has to offer to potential clients with regard to new developments in the overseas migration scene and how the agency has been faring as of late.

Q: The eligibility for a General Skill Migration (GSM) visa policy of Australia is set to undergo changes with new policy changes introduced in Australia that will take place from 1st September 2007, what can you tell us about this?

Ms.Pathirage: Well, for a start an on-line application facility will be introduced for all GSM visa subclasses, which includes online sponsorship application submission facility, changing the IELTS requirement from Vocational to competent English. A piece of news that's gladdening is that the process of Australian Sponsored visa will see significant relaxation, so hopeful migrants who have close relatives in Australia, specially in NZW may see this as a very favourable development. A new visa category is set to be introduced for degree holders; it is expected to be a relaxed selection process and the current visa structure for Australia will be simplified as well. The changes will be in effect from the 1st of September this year, and we feel that overall it looks optimistic for migrants.

Q: Tell us a bit about the other general changes they have made

Ms.Pathirage: Satisfying the skill assessment is one of the most crucial requirements in this process. The skill assessment authorities in Australia had conducted a fundamental evaluation about the skill recognition of an applicant. The immigration survey conducted had revealed that the paper based skill assessment process does not cater to their exact requirement as sometimes it allows unskilled people entry in to their country who will not contribute to their economy.

For applicants with vocational trade skills like Motor Mechanics, Electricians, Plumbers, a trades skill test will be conducted from 1st of September, if they are from countries like Sri Lanka, the Philippines, India, United Kingdom, and South Africa.

Q: What effects have all this had on



your agency's operations so far?

Ms.Pathirage: When the South Australian government declared the deadline was 25th of July 2007 regarding the SIR sponsorship process with very short notice, we found ourselves in a crisis. The south Australian government announced that the online application facility will be put off-line from 25th July to the 1st of September 2007 which became a very challenging target to us.

We had a large number of applications for the South Australian SIR visa category at that stage to be processed. But owing to the great support our clients gave us, and the committed service of the CDC staff, I'm glad to say we made a success story out of it and we now do not have a single pending application.

Q: How are you going to educate your clientele about these new changes?

Ms.Pathirage: During this period we maintained internal deadlines to simplify our application process. For an example, for SIR applicants for South Australia, the final date for research work submission was set at 20th July 2007 and for other GSM applicants, it is 15th August 2007. This transition was a hectic time; applicants who had not even handed in their cases suddenly started calling us and requested to take over their cases to avoid new changes. But we had to refuse most of them because it was not feasible with the internal deadlines we had set at CDC. But we have explained to them about the changes, what can be expected and how it would be for them individually.

Q: As a migration consultancy which specializes in migration to Australia what

are the visa categories your agency handles?

Ms.Pathirage: The visa categorization can be seen as mainly- Permanent visas and Temporary visas. The first of these has several subclasses such as the Skilled Independent, the State Territory Nominated Independence (STNI), Australian Sponsored, which are permanent resident visas. Then in the category of temporary visas you find the SIR(Provisional) Visa and Australia Designated Area (Provisional) Visa which are temporary visas which can convert to resident visa position by providing evidence of one year's work experience in Australia.

Q: To return to the subject of the changes to take place due to migration policy changes in Australia, would you say it affects your establishment favourably?

Ms.Pathirage: Well, generally it would seem that certain relaxations made regarding certain categories appear favourable. Especially the newly introduced visa categories will benefit us as we are more focused on Professional categories than Trades Skilled categories. And of course if we strategize accordingly to meet these changes and plan well ahead, our operations can successfully maintain its flow. After all being in this line of work for nearly a decade has equipped this organization with hands on experience which gives us the confidence to meet the challenges ahead.

And by maintaining our credibility and commitment to deliver quality service to our clients, who place their faith in us, the CDC can surely stay ahead in the race.

Year 2007