



From Talent Shortage to Talent Pipeline

Shaping Progress® OpenEdge®
Developers Through Internships

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Meet the Speakers



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Executive Head, Digital Innovation
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MIP

Growing Developer Challenges & Traditional Hiring Realities

There is a recognized challenge in sourcing skilled OpenEdge Advanced Business Language (ABL) developers because demand often exceeds supply.

The Current Landscape



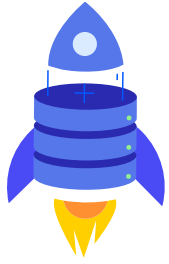
**1.2 million
developer shortage
projected by 2026**

Source: Bureau of Labor
Statistics



**85.2 million unfilled
tech jobs globally
by 2030**

Source: Career Builder



Opportunity for Growth and Strategic Investment

Strategic Opportunity:

- Rethink talent strategies and invest in future growth.

Forward-Looking Narrative:

- By focusing on proactive talent management, you position your org for success.

Key Takeaway:

- Now is the time to build a skilled team that will drive innovation and sustain your business for years to come.

Have You Considered An Internship Program?



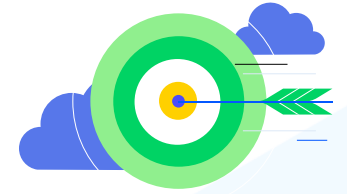
**80% of employers believe internships
are the best ROI.**

National Association of Colleges and Employers

Internships Over Traditional Hiring

Benefit	Internship Programs	Traditional Hiring
Quality Control	Train in your methods & standards	Less control over training
Cultural Fit	Shape within your values	Harder to assess upfront
Cost Effectiveness	60% lower cost	Higher recruitment costs
Retention Rates	67% retention	44% retention
Innovation Boost	Fresh perspectives & creativity	Less new thinking
Pipeline	Continuous, predictable talent flow	Inconsistent; reactive
Competitive Edge	Unique, hard-to-replicate capabilities	Easier for competitors

Why Build an Internship Program?



- Provides a steady flow of talent
- Can easily be integrated into workflow & culture
- Boosts retention and long-term success
- Provides hands-on experience for new talent
- Strengthens your employer brand
- Creates leadership and mentoring opportunities
- Enhances community relations

MIP: Real Results from a Proven Internship Program



Talent Acquisition 2025



It is accepted that challenges are experienced to attract new, capable and competent people to become Progress OpenEdge developers.

This presentation is to share further information on our MIP Internship program that was developed over a number of years to satisfy our own internal need for developers, while empowering and making a difference in South Africa.

AGENDA

- **Where is South Africa, who is MIP and what are the challenges faced?**
- **Recap of Talent Acquisition program**
- **What have we learned and how are we improving?**





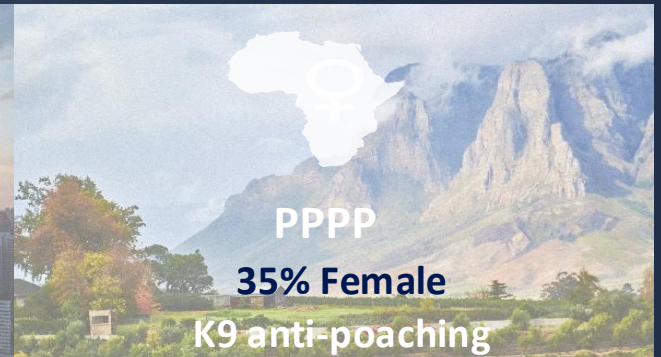
24+ MILLION
BENEFICIARIES



LEVEL 1
B-BBEE Contributor



600+ STRONG
Team of MIPeople



PPPP
35% Female
K9 anti-poaching



HealthCare, Risk and Funding



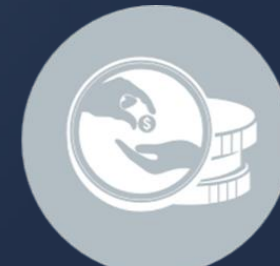
Individual Risk & Insurance



Group Risk & Insurance



Wealth Management



Lending



Research & Innovation



Continuous Improvement



Big Data



**International & Outsourced
Development**

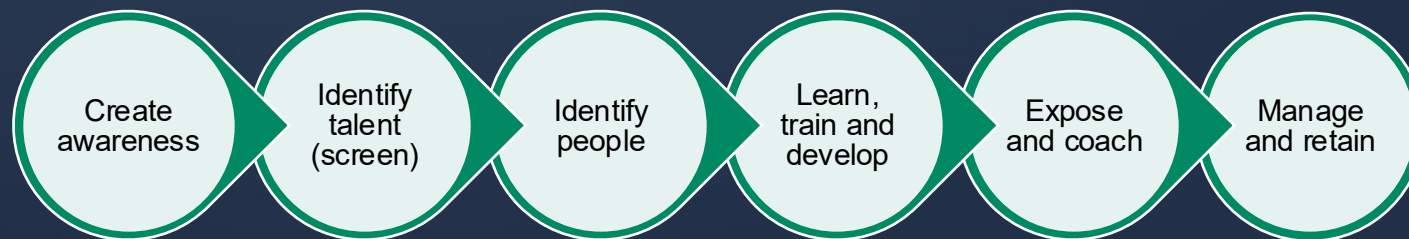
A Quick Recap of Our Talent Acquisition Program

- **MIP recognized the need for skilled Progress OpenEdge developers to support our business and started the program in 2008.**
- **We accepted the role that MIP can play to transform workplaces from a moral, social and regulatory perspective.**
- **We followed a formal process to attract, identify, learn, train, mentor, develop and retain new people to satisfy our own Progress OpenEdge internal needs.**



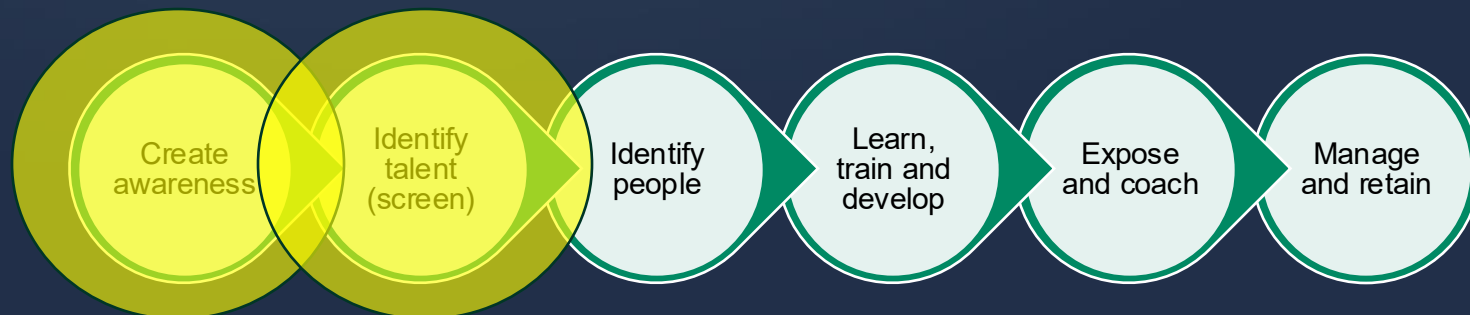
A Quick Recap of Our Talent Acquisition Program

- Over the years, we have trained more than 550 people, of which nearly 400 are still with MIP.
- Over the past few years, we have placed skilled MIP professionals with external clients where their technical abilities, backed by MIP's extensive experience in application development, have delivered tremendous and cost-effective value.



A Quick Recap of Our Talent Acquisition Program

- Initially, we approached universities, institutions and job fairs to provide information on the internship.
- Combined with recruitment agencies, LinkedIn and word-of-mouth and internal references, we fed our pipeline.
- Using online puzzles and games (that have been enhanced!), as well as in-person tests, we screened and tested applicants' logic and critical thinking.

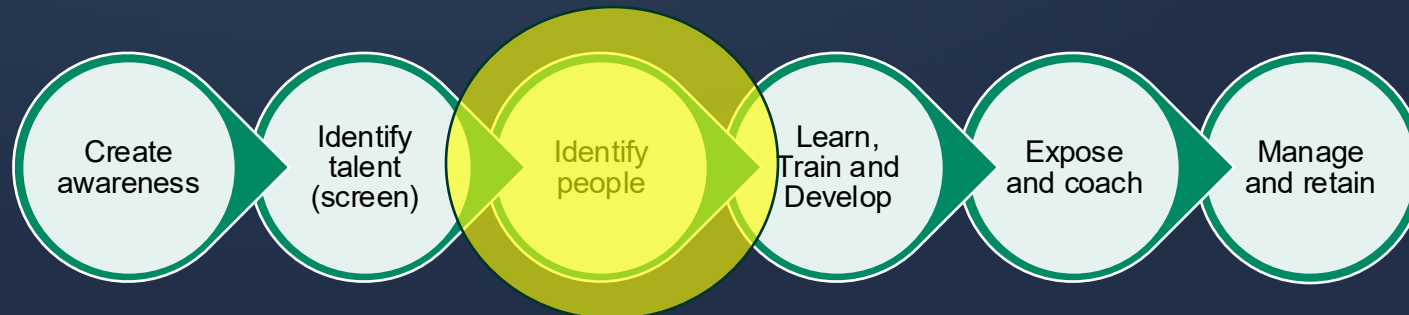


We have received up to 1200 solved games



A Quick Recap of Our Talent Acquisition Program

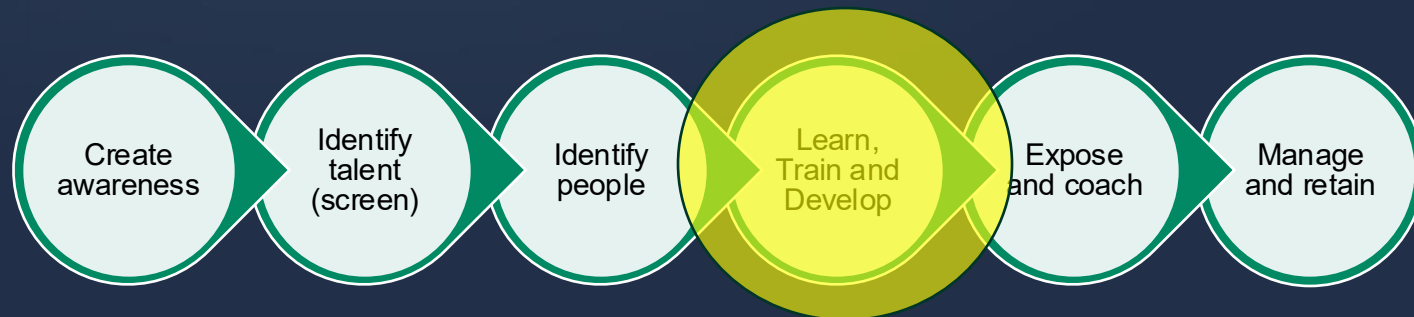
- Once CVs had been received, in-person interviews with MIP took place to focus on personality and technical performance.
- Based on results of the tests and interviews, the final list of applicants was compiled and, with the top ranked being accepted based on future needs of MIP.
- A full-time internship paid contract was offered for 3 years with the person treated as a full-time employee.



Largest class was 31

A Quick Recap of Our Talent Acquisition Program

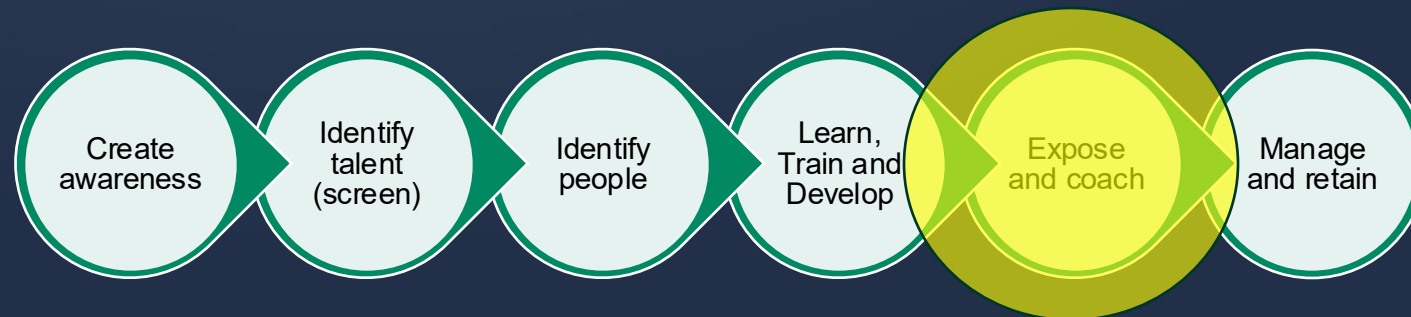
- Started with 3-month training focusing on Progress OpenEdge development, MIP Digital Stack and Framework and our internal standards, in addition to exposing to our culture and ways of working.
- Held practical training and exercises to complement theory, with continuous assessments taking place.
- Also had some of our interns and recent (and not so recent) graduates complete the Progress Courses.



On average about 5% of candidates fall out during internship

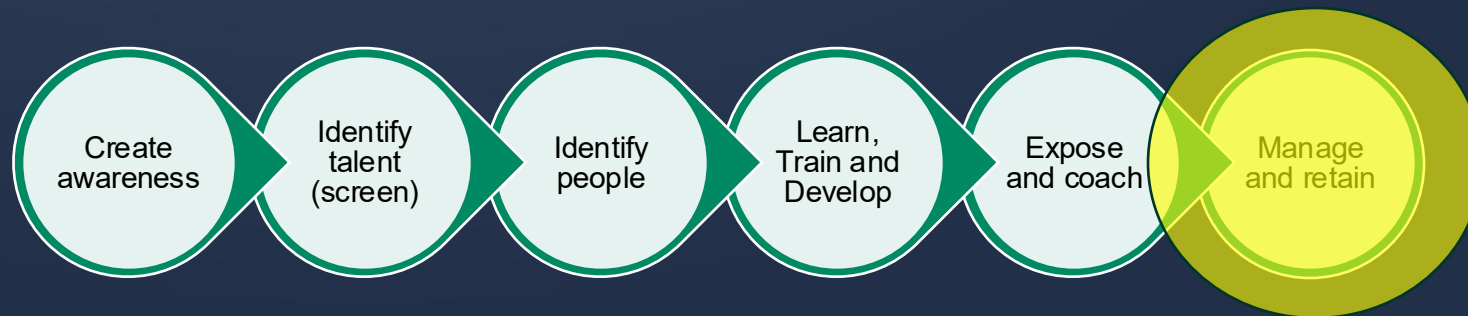
A Quick Recap of Our Talent Acquisition Program

- On the last day of the internship, the class had the opportunity to present its practical system to Exco.
- Successful interns were placed within divisions, based on company needs and candidates' qualities.
- Using sprint buddies, peer reviewers with team leaders and seniors, and whilst working on small tasks, interns were further developed and exposed to real code.



A Quick Recap of Our Talent Acquisition Program

- To formalize qualification, MIP entered into an agreement with an accredited and certified training institution where Junior Engineers could attend classes to receive diploma-equivalent accredited qualification.
- We are also exploring accreditation and formal recognition of our classes with Progress in the future as well.



408 out of 525
who completed
course are still
with MIP



A Quick Recap of Our Talent Acquisition Program

Examples of successes:



Shelley Robertson

*Joining the MIP internship in 2017 was the kickstart I needed, not just for my career, but for my confidence. The mentorship and real-world experience I received laid a solid foundation, where I learned early on the value of clarity and never making assumptions, a mindset that continues to guide how I work today. – **Senior Developer***



Jonas Riba

Jonas started in 2021 and worked as intern on one of the busiest clients in MIP, where he grew from intern, developer, senior developer, and ultimately now, to Tech Arch where he is responsible for the application for 3 major clients. – **Participated in class of 2016**



Courtney Marchi

*It is always a risk taking on someone with very little coding experience, but the internship gives you the tools to demonstrate your abilities as you are actively learning. I found it a wonderful experience where I was able to prove myself and my abilities as a coder. The internship gave me a good platform on which to grow within my team, so as my knowledge and experience grew, I always had a framework from the internship. – **Class of 2023 and Senior Developer***



Keku Mashego

*We were told to keep learning, even once we moved to the teams we would still be learning and most lessons we will carry with us for the rest of our lives. – **Senior Developer***

Improvement

- **Improvements to acquisition process**
 - Refine questions and tools used
 - Protect integrity of online and in-person tests
- **Improvements to training course itself**
 - Incorporate new versions and features of tools
 - Take on feedback from Divisions
 - Request that new, current and older interns complete Progress Courses to compare and evaluate results
- **Expand exposure to more Progress tools and capabilities**
 - OpenEdge, Corticon, MarkLogic
 - IDE tools
 - Other tools (AI)



Talent Acquisition 2025



Building Your Pipeline

Step 1 – Define Clear Objectives

Clear objectives will influence everything

- What resources and support will be needed?
- How will participants be selected?
- How long will the program run?
- Who will be mentors?
- How will you track success?
- What incentives or recognition will mentors/mentees receive?
- What communication channels will be used?
- How will you celebrate successes and share outcomes?

Step 2 – Develop a Structured Curriculum

- A successful internship program thrives on a well-structured curriculum
- **Include various types of training and courses:**

Assessment Exams

Check Your Understanding Questions

Concept Readings

Developer Certification

Step 3 – Engage Interns with Hands-On Learning

- Real-world projects should focus on:
 - **Tackling current challenges** that align with your business objectives
 - **Collaborating with different teams** so that interns gain insights into cross-functional workflows and various departments
 - **Contributing to OpenEdge development** by building new features, optimizing processes or resolving technical debt

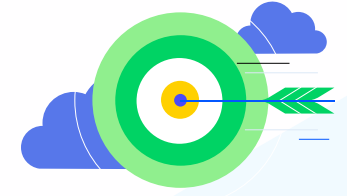
Step 4 – Implement a Strong Mentorship Program

- Identify and empower talent to serve as mentors for interns
- A strong mentorship program should focus on:
 - **Hosting regular check-ins** to discuss progress
 - **Providing constructive feedback** on coding practices, problem-solving and teamwork
 - **Encouraging knowledge transfer** from senior developers to interns
 - **Offering shadowing opportunities** where interns can observe mentors handling real-world issues

Step 5 – Continuously Evaluate and Improve

- **Gathering feedback from both interns and mentors** to identify strengths and areas for improvement in the program
- **Tracking conversion/retention rates** from interns to full-time hires and how long are they staying around
- **Reviewing skills and knowledge** gained during the internship and comparing them with your business needs

Creating Awareness & Attracting Talent



-  Partner with **local universities** and **coding academies**
-  Become involved in **job fairs** and **recruitment events**
-  Create **referral** and **ambassador programs**
-  Engage with **developer communities** online
-  Host **hackathons** and **coding competitions**
-  Run or sponsor **bootcamps** and **workshops**
-  Participate in **developer conferences** and **meetups**

Attracting Top Talent with the Right Messaging

- Highlight ease of learning
- Promote developer productivity
- Integrated database
- Emphasize stability and career growth
- Share success stories

“No OpenEdge experience? No problem! We provide free training and it will take you this amount of time.”

“With your Java/C#/Python background, you’ll catch on to ABL quickly.”

“With an English-style syntax you will pick it up quickly, speeding up onboarding and development cycles”

“OpenEdge developers receive strong demand!”

“OpenEdge offers professionals a way to differentiate their careers and enjoy lasting job security in a crowded tech landscape.”

“We power applications you hear about and use every single day.”

Resources for Success

Educational Resources for Your Program

Free OpenEdge Developer Learning Path & Certification:

- **Structured Curriculum:** OpenEdge fundamentals program
- **Exercises and Applications:** Hands-on experience
- **Assessments:** Check-ins for knowledge and skills
- **Certification:** Upon completion, receipt of industry-recognized validation

The learning path includes the following courses and assessment exams:

- ✓ Introduction to Progress OpenEdge: OpenEdge 12 Course
- ✓ Introduction to OpenEdge Database: OpenEdge 12 Course
- ✓ Introduction to OpenEdge Application Architecture: OpenEdge 12 Course
- ✓ Introduction to Progress Application Server for OpenEdge for Developers: OpenEdge 12 Course
 - Introduction to Progress Application Server for OpenEdge for Developers: OpenEdge 12 Assessment Exam
- ✓ Introduction to Progress Developer Studio for OpenEdge: OpenEdge 12 Course
 - Introduction to Progress Developer Studio for OpenEdge: OpenEdge 12 Assessment Exam
- ✓ Introduction to Object-oriented Programming: OpenEdge 12 Course
 - Introduction to Object-oriented Programming: OpenEdge 12 Assessment Exam
- ✓ Using ProDataSets: OpenEdge 12 Course
 - Using ProDataSets: OpenEdge 12 Assessment Exam
- ✓ ABL Essentials: OpenEdge 12 Course
 - ABL Essentials: OpenEdge 12 Assessment Exam

This bundle also includes an instance of the Basic OpenEdge Developer Certification Exam.

<https://www.progress.com/services/education/openedge/basic-openedge-developer-bundle>

Educational Resources for Your Program

The screenshot displays a web interface for educational resources. At the top, there are three tabs: 'On-Demand Training' (selected), 'Instructor-Led Training', and 'Customized Training'. Below the tabs, the page is organized into sections for 'OPENEDGE 12 DEVELOPER' and 'OPENEDGE 12 ADMINISTRATOR'. Under 'OPENEDGE 12 DEVELOPER', there are three course cards: 'Basic OpenEdge Developer Learning Path and Certification Exam' (with a 'LEARNING PATH' tag and 'SUBSCRIBE FOR FREE' button), 'ABL Performance Tuning: OpenEdge 12 Course' (with 'SUBSCRIBE' button), and 'Modernize an ABL Application in OpenEdge: OpenEdge 12 Course' (with a 'NEW' tag and 'SUBSCRIBE' button). Below these is a 'Show All Content' link with a dropdown arrow. Under 'OPENEDGE 12 ADMINISTRATOR', there is one course card: 'Migrate to Progress Application Server for OpenEdge: OpenEdge 12 Course' (with 'SUBSCRIBE FOR FREE' button).

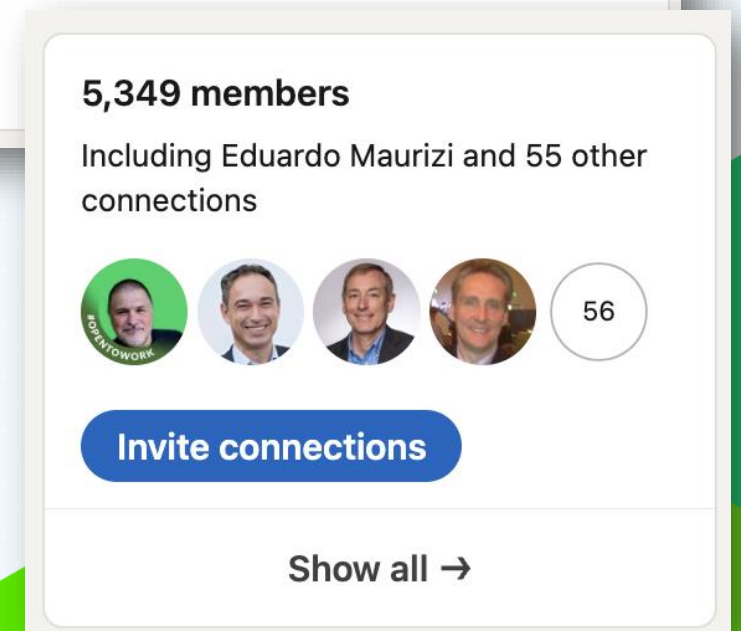
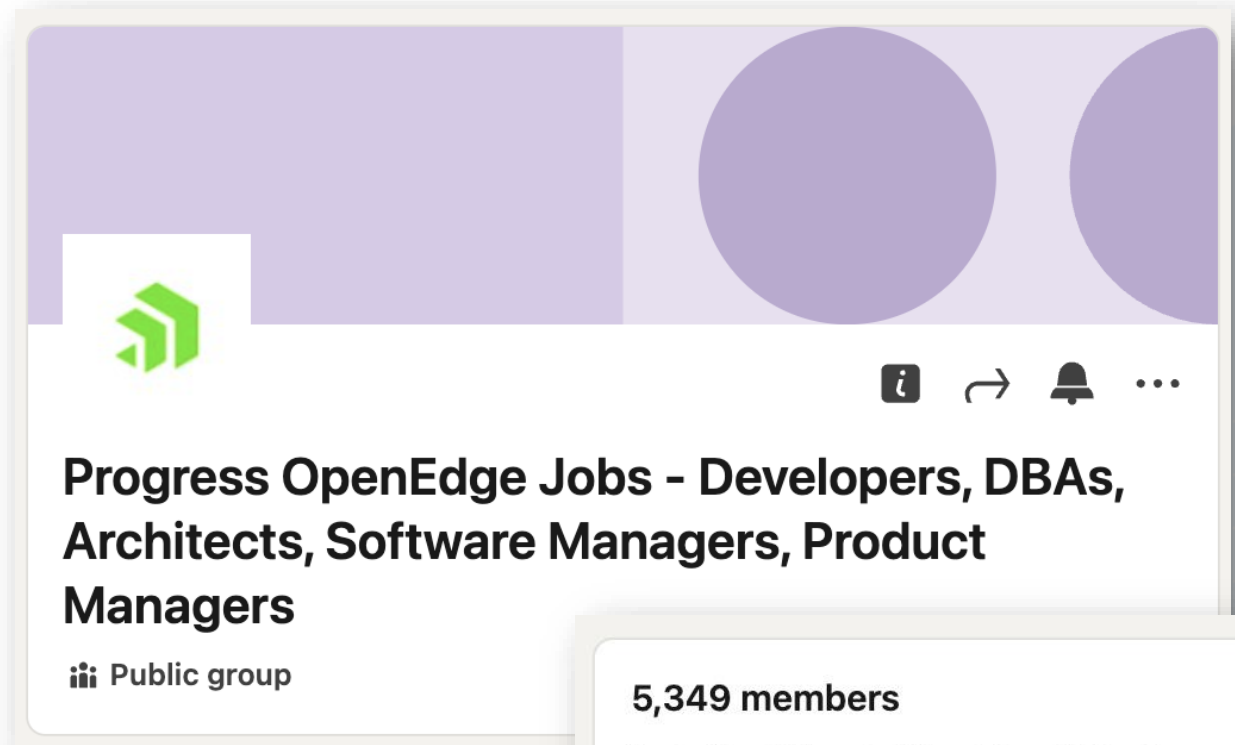
<https://www.progress.com/services/education/openedge#on-demand>

Comprehensive Training Options:

- **On-Demand Training:** Self-paced learning with flexible access
- **Instructor-Led Training:** Live sessions with expert guidance
- **Customized Training:** Tailored programs for specific needs
- **Progress Academy:** Intensive 4-week accelerated program

LinkedIn Group

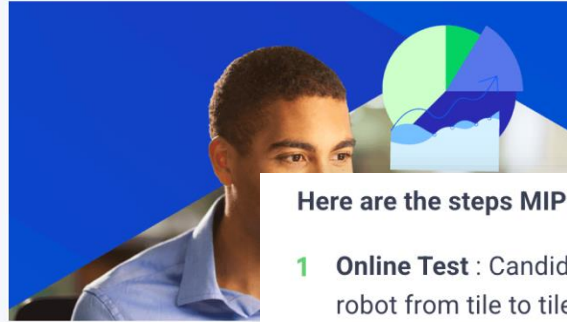
- **Join our LinkedIn group to share your internship opportunities!**
- Connect with a vibrant community of OpenEdge customers and partners—all focused on discovering top developer talent.
- <https://www.linkedin.com/groups/1913256/>



MIP Internship Success Story Blog

Application Development OpenEdge

Building an OpenEdge Developer Base: The Impact of MIP's Internship Program



by Jessica (Malakian) Newton | Posted on March 18, 2025

<https://www.progress.com/blogs/building-an-openedge-developer-base-the-impact-of-mips-internship-program>

Here are the steps MIP uses to identify candidates for the internship program:

- 1 Online Test :** Candidates start with an online puzzle test, where participants move a robot from tile to tile, switching on lights and moving in various directions. It involves 25 levels with each level getting progressively more difficult as it goes along. MIP receives up to 1200 solved games monthly.
- 2 Follow-Up Test:** Qualified candidates who do well on the online test are invited to the MIP offices in Johannesburg or Cape Town for a follow-up test that simulates pressure to evaluate logical thinking and pattern recognition. These tests are marked, and feedback is given immediately.
- 3 VZAP Test:** Qualified candidates who pass the follow-up test are then asked to complete a 5-hour VZAP test that tests concentration, perception, spec reading, concepts of tables and concepts of pointers. A 70% pass mark is required.
- 4 In-Person Interviews:** After the testing, successful candidates submit CVs and attend interviews focusing on personality and technical performance.

Young Developer Success Stories



“It is a well-structured language and allows for beginners to start writing functional code pretty quickly.”

[Read Jason's Story](#)



“Coming from a Java background, I found ABL refreshingly human-readable and easy to memorize.”

[Read Eglè's Story](#)



“If you are building a business application, I will definitely recommend OpenEdge.”

[Read Sinan's Story](#)



“ABL is easy to learn, with a basic syntax that brings productivity to the software engineering team.”

[Read Lucas's Story](#)

Ready to Build Your Own Program?

- Start small—think BIG!
- Leverage available resources
- Create your own OpenEdge talent pipeline!

Read a whitepaper based on finding OpenEdge talent!



Table of Contents

1. Building the Next Generation of OpenEdge Developers / 3
2. What to Look for in a Candidate / 4 Key Skills to Consider / 4 Expanding Your Talent Pool / 5
3. Why Expand Your Talent Pool? / 6 How to Identify Talent Beyond Degrees / 7
4. Building a Sustainable Talent Pipeline: The Value of an Internship Program / 7 How to Establish an Effective OpenEdge Internship Program / 7 Step 1: Define Clear Objectives Step 2: Develop a Structured Curriculum Step 3: Partner with Educational Institutions Step 4: Implement a Strong Mentorship Program Step 5: Engage Interns with Real-World Projects Step 6: Continuously Evaluate and Improve
5. Attracting Top Talent with the Right Messaging / 14 Key Messaging Points for Job Descriptions and Interviews / 15 Ease of Learning ABL and How It Aligns with Their Existing Skills Increased Developer Productivity When Working with the OpenEdge Platform Skills They Will Gain to Enhance Their Career Prospects
6. Leveraging Platforms to Maximize Reach / 17 Maximize Your Reach: Connect with Top Talent / 17
7. How It Works / 18 Stay Flexible and Open-Minded / 18

News You Can Use



- Take the OpenEdge Customer Survey - Now until November 14
- Learn About Product News
 - OpenEdge Command Center (OECC) 2.0
 - OpenEdge Memory Profiler (OEMP)
 - VS Code Extension
- Explore Progress AI Solutions
 - Progress Agentic RAG
 - Progress OpenEdge MCP Connector for ABL
- Discover How To
 - Earn Points for Prizes in the OpenEdge Community
 - Become OpenEdge 12 Certified for Free
 - Manage Your Migration to OpenEdge 12

The logo icon for Progress consists of three green, stylized, overlapping chevron shapes pointing to the right, arranged in a slightly offset, stacked manner.

Progress[®]



MIP

A SOCIAL SOLUTION IN A DIGITAL DIMENSION