

By Pauline Lane



Choosing a Staffing Service

Choosing the right staffing service is like choosing your doctor or auto mechanic - you want to be sure that they specialize in what it is you are seeking to get accomplished. There are services that are generalists (just like your family doctor) and there are specialty services which focus on a specific area of expertise (i.e. accounting, engineering, finance, human resources, biotech, medical, etc.). It's very important that you choose the right service for the position you wish to fill.

Today's business climate is constantly changing, and so are the needs of your company. You can hire an individual on a "temporary" basis to get you through the busy times, fill in for medical and/or maternity leaves, assist with special projects or projects that you do not wish your permanent staff to handle, or even fill in while you are looking to hire that new employee. You can also hire an applicant that may be "temp-to-hire," to give you and the prospective employee an opportunity to "try each other out" for a period of time (for example, 90 days) to see if the position and the applicant are the right fit before, hiring the individual on to your payroll. This is usually a "win-win" situation for both the employer and the employee.

Conversely, the "direct hire" approach is one in which the staffing service you have chosen will recruit the ideal candidate for the specific position you're looking to fill for a fee based on a percentage of the employee's annual salary. The employee then goes directly onto your payroll. This process is highly recommended for the current business climate.

Finding the right staffing agency

Before signing on with a staffing service, make sure the company you are considering working with meets the following criteria:

- The firm is licensed in the city which it is doing business.
- All insurances are in place (i.e. workers compensation, liability, errors and omissions and non-owned Auto, if required).
- All applicants are tested for the skills they say they possess using state-of-the-art software.
- All applicants are referenced checked going back a minimum of five to seven years.
- The service has the capability of background and drug screening applicants should the position require it.
- The decision making process is handled within the office with which you are doing business.
- The recruiter working on your account has stability within the staffing industry.
- Wages paid are competitive for the position to be filled.
- Be sure to ask how employees are recruited to be sure they are attracting quality talent.



The staffing industry generated more than \$82 billion in revenue in 2005 - \$70 billion from temporary and contract services and approximately \$12 billion in direct hire services. America's work force is evolving as an increasing number of people are looking for the flexibility that temporary work provides. Companies are tapping into this flexible labor market to keep them fully staffed during busy times.

Your company should be ready to meet its growth by partnering with the right staffing service so you can focus your efforts on implementing new practices for your firm, expansion, or hiring qualified talent to ensure the health of your business for years to come. **HB**

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