

Part I of a continuing series

Don't go it alone!

Here's how one business solved a difficult problem with the strategic use of staffing services.

If you think that temps are best used as fill-ins for vacationing employees, think again! Savvy executives are discovering that temporaries (and staffing services) can be used to solve some of their toughest business challenges. From easing the pain of layoffs to turning around under-productive departments and even driving revenue growth, staffing is proving to be an extremely valuable strategic tool.

In this series, we take a look at how three real-life companies have used staffing services to their advantage. This month, an electronics manufacturer needs to hire 30 new employees in a hurry...but on a very tight budget!



Case Study #1: Low-budget, mistake-free hiring

The Challenge:

Hire 30 people on a strict budget and ensure no bad hires.

Background:

Thanks to a facilities expansion, an electronics manufacturer needed to hire 30 new employees, including a buyer, a production supervisor, and a large number of customer service representatives and production laborers.

As policy, all new hires were required to submit to extensive background checks, drug screening and skills testing. The manufacturer had just one HR representative, who was responsible for managing all these tasks while adhering to strict budgetary limitations.

The Solution:

The electronics manufacturer turned to a staffing service for assistance. The staffing service analyzed the situation and, with the HR manager, developed the following process:

1. Pre-employment walk-throughs

To minimize the chance of hiring mistakes and reduce the cost of the evaluation process, a pre-employment walk-through was created for the CSR and production laborer candidates. These walk-throughs allowed the manufacturer to interview each candidate, and showcase the facility and the job duties first hand. Only those who passed the interview and expressed sincere interest in the job duties would complete the more extensive (and costly) background checks.

Continued on the following page >

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How one manufacturer used strategic staffing to solve a business dilemma

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The Solution:

2. Outsource recruiting activities

To expedite the hiring process and minimize recruiting costs, the staffing firm took over responsibility for developing display advertising, administering paperwork, developing job descriptions, conducting pre-employment drug screening, criminal background checks, application appraisals, pre-screening, processing, interviewing, testing, reference checking and making candidate recommendations.

3. Use temporary, temp-to-hire and direct hire services.

To get the new facility staffed as quickly as possible, temporary employees were hired first, while the search was conducted for full-time hires. To reduce the chances of bad hires, temp-to-hire services were used, which allowed the manufacturer to test some candidates on-the-job before committing to a hiring decision. And finally, some candidates were hired on a contingency fee basis, which eliminated up-front recruiting costs and provided the manufacturer with a 30-day satisfaction guarantee.

The Results:

By working closely with the manufacturer, the staffing service was able to successfully fill all openings within the manufacturer's time schedule and budgetary constraints. Other benefits included:

- By outsourcing recruiting and shifting overhead expenses, the manufacturer was able to reduce overtime and training expenses and significantly lower their average cost per hire.
- By eliminating the burden of most of the hiring activities, key staff could focus on more critical tasks. As a result, their productivity improved.
- By using a structured hiring process, the electronics manufacturer was able to ensure legal hiring practices were followed and prevent bad hires.



Next: Using a staffing service to eliminating low-performing employees when it's time to recall laid-off workers.