

8 Most Common Mistakes made by companies in their selection of staffing services:

1. GENERALIST OR SPECIALIST?

Selecting a generalist vs. a specialist. Most companies choose their staffing service because they like their sales rep who usually tells them that they ‘can do it all’ clerical positions, industrial positions, whatever.

Select a staffing service that specializes in your industry. Someone who has the expertise and knowledge to not only handle your day-to-day employment staffing needs but who can anticipate future needs and offer suggestions and alternatives to any employment challenges you may encounter. Select a service that already knows your business. You probably don’t have the time or the desire to teach a service how to help you. Specialization works. IE

You wouldn’t go to a linen store to buy machinery – why use a clerical staffing service to fill your industrial positions?

2. EXPERIENCE - TOO LITTLE OF THE RIGHT EXPERIENCE

The staffing industry is filled with companies that have been in business for less than 3 years. These companies are usually staffed with good people with little knowledge or experience with industrial staffing.

As with most businesses, it’s the little things that a company does or doesn’t do that add up and make the difference between a bad experience and a good experience.

Why does Starbucks sell more coffee than anyone else? One – it’s all they do and two - they do the little things better than anyone else that sells coffee. They’re *specialists*.

3. SCREENING – MOST STAFFING COMPANIES SCREENING TOOLS ARE GEARED TOWARD ADMINISTRATIVE POSITIONS.

Many staffing companies claim extensive screening of their applicants but staffing services that are primarily clerical in nature tend to focus on what they know best - office skills assessments. The “One size fits all” approach doesn’t usually work in most situations.

Suggestion: Conduct your own study. Send one of your trusted employees to each of the staffing services that you are considering using and ask him/her to complete the application process and report back to you with their findings.

Suggested areas of evaluation:

- ** Was an appointment required?
- ** Was the applicant required to have a resume?
- ** Own transportation required?

- ** Were they treated professionally/competently by the staffing services staff?
- ** Did they experience a thorough interview with questions about their previous experience, work history, work preferences, commute limitations, abilities, limitations etc.
- ** Were they required to have relevant industrial experience?
- ** Were they drug tested?
- ** Was a criminal background check done?

This autonomous shopping should give you valuable insight into the quality of the staffing services' screening and evaluation process. It should help you determine if there's quality built into the entire organization or just the sale process.

4. EASE OF USE – YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE TO TRAIN YOUR SERVICE

Many industrial companies resist switching staffing services for fear of having to 'teach' the service about their individual needs.

Specialized staffing services should already have a good working knowledge of your industry. Getting 'up to speed' on your specific requirements should be quick and painless.

Knowing what questions to ask and coming to the table with a working knowledge of industry will make for an easy transition from one service to another.

Chances are good that the specialized staffing company has other customers in your industry; so ramping up to your specific requirements should be relatively easy.

5. DEPENDABILITY “ I DON'T WANT A REPLACEMENT, I WANT IT DONE RIGHT THE FIRST TIME”

Finding good workers is one thing. Finding good workers who are dependable is another. Even with sophisticated, psychological and dependability testing, finding workers who are committed to doing a good job and will stick to the assignment is a challenge for all staffing services, generalists or specialists.

Experienced staffing services know this and are prepared to deal with it.

A good service will actually test the employee's dependability by requiring him/her to physically locate the assignment work site BEFORE the assignment begins. This helps to ensure the employee knows the exact location of the company, which increases the likelihood of their reporting to work on time.

In the event several employees are needed for an assignment, good specialized staffing companies will have a contingency plan established ahead of time. If one or more of the new employees doesn't report on time, back up employees will be assigned to fill in, if necessary. This back up plan may include the staffing service representative meeting the employees at the job site before the assignment begins and selecting the appropriate

number of employees for the assignment. The back up employees not selected for work that day will be reimbursed by the staffing service for their time and travel costs and given preference on future assignments.

6 SELECTION FIND OUT HOW YOUR SERVICE WEEDS OUT THE BAD APPLES - BETTER YET, ASK THEIR CUSTOMERS HOW WELL THEY DO IT.

Finding qualified employees is always a challenge. Experienced staffing companies know that in order to find enough qualified employees, literally hundreds of applicants must be seen from a broad geographic area. After thoroughly screening and testing these applicants, a large number of applicants will be weeded out for simply not making the grade. A staffing company that has a strong recruiting division enables them to be more selective in choosing capable employee. This results in a better-matched employee for you.

Beyond just qualifying an applicant's hard skills, specialized interviewers weed out applicants who fail to meet other criteria such as neat appearance, attitude, good hygiene, eye contact, body language and communication skills.

Many applicants look good, say the right things and convince inexperienced interviewers that they can do the job. This often results in 'no shows' for their assignment or poor performance, due to an ineffective interview.

It's impossible to be absolutely certain of an employee's future performance but an experienced interviewer will weed out the majority of unqualified applicants.

7. FOLLOW THROUGH - IS YOUR SERVICE JUST INTERESTED IN FILLING TODAY'S ORDERS OR ARE THEY LOOKING TO BUILD A LONG TERM PARTNERSHIP?

Things change. Your needs may change. The skills you need, length of the assignment, temp to hire positions, projects, peak periods etc. all necessitate change. An experienced specialist will work diligently to stay abreast of your changing needs and offer cost-effective staffing solutions.

8. GUARANTEE – ASK YOUR SERVICE TO ASSUME THE FINANCIAL RISK.

Words are cheap and plentiful. Select a staffing company that not only "Talks the Talk" but "Walks the Walk" In other words, the service should have enough confidence in their ability to meet your needs that in the event they fail, they should be prepared to absorb the cost and remove the financial risk for you.

I believe a staffing service should be confident enough in their service to offer you a guarantee so strong, that it reduces or eliminates your risk. It's worth stating that if a really good service offered such a guarantee and had to use it very often - they couldn't afford it. If your service doesn't have the confidence to offer such a guarantee, why should they expect you to?