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Executive Search

Increase Your Hiring Flexibility with Contracting

In today's ever-challenging business environment, flexibility can be difficult to come by, and ironically, it's just when you need it the most that it seems to be in the shortest supply.

Hiring is no different. When certain conditions arise, it's often difficult to utilize traditional avenues for solving hiring problems. As a result, it's critical to remain open to alternative staffing solutions, ones that can not only meet a need, but also provide a measure of flexibility in the process.

Do you currently find yourself in one of the following situations (or have so in the past)?

- Is hiring somebody on a direct-hire basis just too risky at this point, considering everything that's happening in the economy?
- Are you experiencing a hiring freeze that prohibits you from hiring somebody on a direct basis?
- Do you want to closely evaluate a candidate's skills before offering full-time employment?
- Do you have a special project that needs to be completed within a specific timeframe, but don't want to add full-time staff?

These are just some of the situations in which alternative staffing solutions—which include contracting—can help overcome the obstacles and meet the hiring challenges you're presently facing.

The benefit to you

Before discussing the benefits associated with these solutions in a more detailed fashion, let's list them in their entirety. They include the following:

1. Contract staffing
2. Temp-to-direct conversions
3. Retiree re-staffing
4. Internships/co-ops

Although all of the above are unique and vary depending upon situations and circumstances, all four are similar in the fact that they can provide needed flexibility during seemingly inflexible economic conditions. This is not to suggest that they replace hiring employees on a full-time basis. Instead, these staffing solutions *complement* a company's direct-hire efforts in order to produce a diverse, comprehensive, and ultimately, more effective hiring strategy. Below are specific ways in which this strategy can benefit you.

- **Expand-contract factor**—You can easily match your workload to your workforce, thus ensuring that you're not overstaffed or understaffed and that your costs are more in line with production.
- **Immediate availability**—Unlike direct-hire candidates, contract candidates are typically available on short notice, usually within days.



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- **“Try-before-you-buy”**—If you’re leery about hiring a candidate on a full-time basis, you can always start them on contract and eventually transition them over (temp-to-direct).
- **Budget flexibility**—Speaking of costs, contractors are typically paid from the operating budget as opposed to the capital budget. As a result, you might still be able to hire contractors even when you’re experiencing budgetary constraints.

Low risk, high reward

How much flexibility would contracting provide for you right now? In terms of investment, cost, and risk, there’s virtually no downside. Once a contractor has completed their project—or if they turn out to be a bad fit—they can be released from their assignment. Consider adding contracting to your hiring strategy, now and in the future . . . because you can never have too much flexibility.

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