

# ORANGE COUNTY BUSINESS JOURNAL

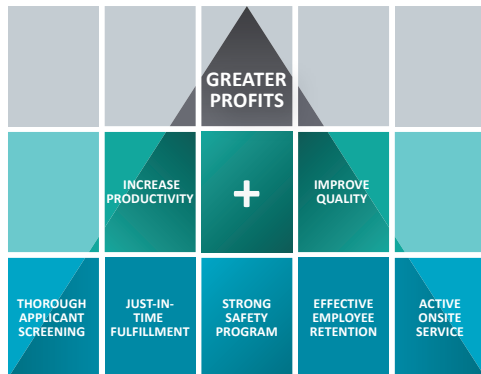
## IMPROVING PRODUCTIVITY AND QUALITY WITH A TEMP WORKFORCE

Have you ever regretted hiring someone? Perhaps they presented themselves well in the interview, but once they started, the headaches began? As many of us know, hiring wrong can have huge financial consequences, especially if you're in manufacturing. Though your business requires a high volume of workers to get you through peak periods, you're also trying to mitigate risk and increase bottom-line profits.

It may require some work up front, but protecting the production line by hiring right is a strategy that is achieving profitable results in the manufacturing and distribution sectors. Workers that feel entitled to more than they have earned will often bring dysfunction into the workplace. These individuals will sometimes look to personally benefit through theft, cheating on timesheets, filing fraudulent workmans comp claims, or even bogus employment lawsuits. Their predatory behaviors not only create an uncomfortable work environment for others, but also pose a serious threat to company profits.

Screening out workplace predators is what Alar Staffing is accomplishing every week, as over 1,200 job applicants come to their Santa Ana and Sante Fe Springs offices looking for employment in light industrial and manufacturing plants in Orange County, Inland Empire, and South Los Angeles. They currently employ an uncomplicated yet focused business model that results in increased productivity and improved quality of work. "Our business model is simple," Pati Cinkle, President of Alar Staffing comments, "We put our client's interest first, then make sure we do the right thing for our employees, and by partnering only with those that share our values, the rest falls easily into place." This philosophy has earned strong loyalty from their clients and has been a major contributor to Alar Staffing's organic growth through referrals.

The downturn in the economy has created an opportunity for many manufacturing and distribution companies to review how they are currently staffing and the criteria for selecting an agency. Though changing providers might not be feasible, ensuring that the five following areas are being addressed can mean that your peak season is uninterrupted by issues that could have been prevented.



Business Model

### Thorough Screening

Approximately 48% of entry-level, light industrial applicants are applying with forged, borrowed, or stolen documents, which makes their true identity unknown and screening for criminal background checks impossible (see inset chart). By educating your HR team on spotting fake documents, you'll protect yourself from future risk and make sure you know who's working with your product.

Take the necessary time to conduct in-depth interviews that include behavioral assessments to screen for predatory tendencies and those who would bring dysfunction to the workplace. And because there is no correlation between placing more people in production and increasing productivity, be sure that you hire the right person through specific skill set testing. It's important that temporary workers be held to the same hiring standards as your direct employees.

### Just-In-Time Fulfillment

Having a back-up staffing agency, may be a good strategy to make sure you can get all the workers needed throughout your production cycles. Pick an agency that has high traffic so you get the best workers possible in the shortest amount of time. If you are consistently having problems with workers not showing up for work, it could be that the agency is not spending enough time qualifying whether the job is truly in the applicant's best interest. Often, with a light industrial workforce, employees have a difficult time finding reliable transportation. In this case, you may benefit from using an agency that provides transportation for its workers.

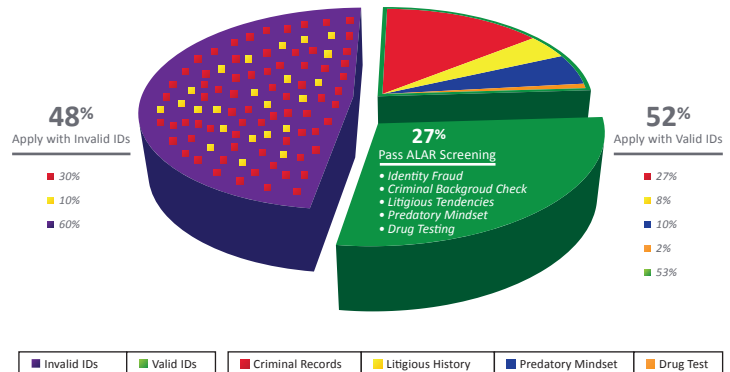
### Safety Program

Though this may seem obvious, companies run into problems when safety programs are not properly implemented. A sound safety program has many components, including a safety committee to strategize and implement the goals of the safety program. These committees engage supervisors and other employees on developing comprehensive and effective safety systems. Because people tend to support that which they've helped create, promoting employee participation is key. Also, having managers and trainers that are OSHA certified can help provide guidance with general practices.

### Employee Retention

If through familiarity comes speed and efficiency, then building programs that appreciate and value

Light Industrial Applicant Statistics



employees will improve productivity and reduce training costs. Employees stay when they feel good about themselves, those they work with, and the company they work for. Cultivating a work environment where employees feel acknowledged and appreciated is the key to employee retention. This might be as easy as hosting a lunch time BBQ or rewarding best performers among their peers and publically acknowledging excellent behavior. Letting employees know you value their contributions is an excellent practice.

### Onsite Management

If you are large enough to have the full-time presence of an agency representative in your facility, you understand how critical this relationship is. Their role is vital in daily management of the temporary workforce. By being active in all disciplinary actions, terminations, injuries, workplace investigations, etc. they minimize co-employment liability. They also play a central role in creating a positive work environment, which can help increase morale. If you have a concern with quality control, ask your onsite manager to create training manuals that will address these issues.

### How do you rate?

By reviewing these 5 areas within your temp workforce, perhaps you can identify weak points that can be modified to reduce risk, increase productivity, and protect company profits. Smart managers are taking time to evaluate their systems and operations and seeing marked improvement in their workplace.

To learn how Alar Staffing is implementing great ideas like these, visit [www.alarstaffing.com](http://www.alarstaffing.com). Their free online Risk Assessment Tool can help you predict with accuracy whether your company might be at risk for dysfunction. Holding to their values of integrity, service, passion, excellence, and discipline, they have earned the confidence of those they serve. In this sense, Alar Staffing has become more than just a staffing agency, but a partner in productivity. ■