

Are You the Customer, or the Employer? Part II



Our summer newsletter began this two part series on issues facing today's employers. We have tried to simplify issues that have recently come to light with the Microsoft case involving ~~temporary employees' rights~~ to employee benefits.

The IRS issues a 20-point test to determine the employee/employer vs. contractor relationship. If you are paying for staffing services, be sure you maintain the status of customer. You don't want to inadvertently become the co-employer.

Previously covered were 4 of the 9 steps to guard against the formation of a common-law, employee-employer relationship between worker and the customer. The following list sums up

5: Customers should rely on the staffing firm to reimburse non-core workers for any expenses incurred in their job performance.

Suburban Staffing requires a customer representative to approve an expense request for any employee. The employee is reimbursed for all approved expenses. The customer is billed for those expenses along with the weekly invoices. This eliminates a potential employer/employee connection with regard to reimbursement.

6: What is a customer to do when a non-core worker approaches them with a work-site complaint or concern?

This is clearly an area where our placement staff is effective. The lines of communication should be open so that the customer and the staffing firm are comfortable with the



exchange of such information. Our certified placement staff is skilled in coaching and counseling. This is beneficial in employee retention, customer service, and minimizing the direct supervision role that could lead to co-employment issues.

7: Customers should discuss with the staffing firm whenever additional projects are to be added to the job description.

It can sometimes be frustrating to the customer to have a placement counselor ask so many questions about the duties our employees are expected to perform. The reason for this is to maintain the direct assignment of duties from this office. Any change or addition to the original job description should come from the employee's supervisor, who is the Suburban Staffing placement counselor.

8: Staffing firms should be more than a payroll service to the customer in order to minimize co-employment issues. What impact does this have on those non-core workers a customer may want to bring in for a project (perhaps a previous employee of the customer?)

The ideal situation to minimize co-employment issues in this case requires us to have a complete job description that we present to our employee. The job should not mirror what the employee did for the customer in the past.

It should encompass other duties and should always be reviewed and presented to the employee by a placement counselor.

9: How should customers handle things such as a non-core employee using company cars, business cards, or letterheads with the customer name on them?

Don't! The non-core workers should always be distinguishable from a customer employee.



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Once you open the lines of communication with our staff, you will appreciate not only the time they save you, but also the potential liability and, in the long run, money. Employee retention is a cost factor in any business. It is costly to train and retrain. Being unfamiliar with employment laws can put your company at great legal risk. The reality of working with people means dealing with issues and problems on a daily basis. This takes time and training in employment law to effectively overcome obstacles and find solutions.



Partnering with the right staffing firm allows businesses to do what they do best. You can save time and money by allowing Suburban to effectively manage your non-core work staff. For over 31 years, Suburban Staffing, Inc. has serviced thousands of customers. Our certified placement staff with over 70 years of combined experience takes customer service to a new level. We are proud to represent your job opportunities to our employees.

- Nancy Carlson, President

*If you are interested in obtaining a copy of the first four steps on determining the employee/employer vs. contractor relationship, call our office at (508) 366-8521, and we will mail you our Summer '99 Newsletter.

Suburban

The past few months have been a time of happy events here at

- ☺ On June 5th, **Mark Carlson**, Outside Sales Representative, married Kelly Ashton in a lovely ceremony followed by a garden reception at the home of Mark's parents, Nancy and John Carlson.
- ☺ On June 27th, **Melinda Napolitano**, Placement Counselor, wed Raymond Schmidt in a beautiful outdoor setting. Melinda's daughters, Wendy and Rachel, and Ray's daughter Heather, attended them. 
- ☺ **Nancy Carlson**, President, celebrated her 5th year as Owner/President of Suburban Staffing, Inc. this past September. The staff helped her celebrate with a party at the "Naked Fish" restaurant. We all wore goofy hats and sang songs about her success. May Nancy continue to celebrate many happy future years of success!
- ☺ Picturesque Scituate Harbor was the backdrop on September 12th for the marriage of **Suzanne Jandrue**, Placement Manager and Steve Santospago. Historic Barker Tavern was the site for the reception festivities.
- ☺ **Kim Weeden**, Placement Counselor, and her husband Ron, eagerly await the arrival of their first child in February. 
- ☺ **Paula Merloni**, Sales Manager, and her husband Jack, beam in anticipation of their first grandchild, expected in April.
- ☺ **Ann Millette**, Support Staff Manager, became engaged to Larry Gentile. Their wedding will take place in September, 2000 at the Martha Mary Chapel in Sudbury.

Sharing the Secrets of Success... With Your Newly Hired Talent

What qualities do your most valued staff members possess? Would you like to develop and retain more people like them? There is a way - establish a Mentoring Program!

FINDING MENTORS

Mentors are generally your knowledgeable, experienced and respected employees who are interested in developing and promoting company talent. To start your mentoring program, ask for volunteers among your most valued staff. Then pool together everyone's ideas and produce a guidebook to ensure direction and consistency. In matching mentors to new recruits, it's a good idea for the mentor to be outside of the developing professional's chain of command. Also, confidentiality should be an important aspect of the relationship.

A MODEL MENTOR

- *Guides* your new recruits as they encounter the unwritten rules of the office. Initially, this would include a discussion of company culture, dress code, and

organization chart. Telephone, e-mail and PC protocols should be discussed, too.

- *Knows* the answers to a wide range of technical and general business issues or can provide referrals for the right answers or opposing opinions.
- *Coaches* his/her new professional on ways to develop business relationships.
- *Supports* and *inspires* confidence in career development, despite obstacles that can and will come along.

KEEPING THE PROGRAM ALIVE

Active involvement is a must for any mentoring program to achieve excellent investment returns. Besides evaluating your program from time to time, you might want to try the following:

- ✓ Conduct quarterly or bi-annual seminars for everyone in the mentoring program. Seminars might focus on how the different departments of the company fit together.

Suburban Staffing, Inc.



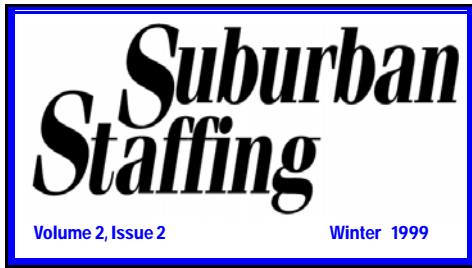
- ✓ Invite management to share their expertise. Introductions will help foster a spirit of camaraderie and give everyone an opportunity to get acquainted.
- ✓ Involve the mentored employees in events planning. Let them conduct a seminar or two under the guidance of one of the mentors. Topics can range from innovative customer service techniques to successful negotiating skills or case studies. Encourage thinking outside the box to ensure a steady influx of new ideas.

Using mentors is a cost-effective way to **attract, develop** and **retain** staff. It is a proven way to ensure success with your new or junior level employees. A mentoring program builds loyalty and can give you the competitive edge in your recruiting efforts. Finally, a mentoring program shows your customers and staff that you recognize your most valuable

INTRODUCTION

We are excited to introduce Karen McInnis as our Personnel Assistant. She will be assisting our placement and recruiting efforts, providing you, our client, with the best possible service. Karen has a solid customer service and administration background. She will be performing evaluation and follow up calls to you, as well as our employees. Karen is available to answer general questions you may have about the status of a job order or confirming dates. Please do not





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Why Suburban Staffing?

Suburban Staffing, Inc.

Partnering with Suburban Staffing, Inc. has many benefits:

We are the oldest and largest independent staffing company in Westborough and surrounding areas with over 1,100 employees on assignment. We specialize in office support staffing but also provide accounting, industrial, technical and professional employees for short or long term staffing. Our full service firm provides for direct-hire placement in all of these areas.

We serve small businesses that need only a few employees or long term customers such as AstraZeneca, New England Power, and Data General, that use a high volume of our employees. Being locally owned and operated allows us to customize our programs to meet our client's unique staffing requirements and

to respond immediately to specific issues that arise. For example, one program we initiated for a client was very successful in improving retention, decreasing turnover and providing cost savings.

While we have the advantages of being independent, our memberships in national associations and networks give us access to the latest industry developments and resources. Our greatest resource, however, is our people. We have an excellent, well trained, and industry certified staff with over 70 years of combined staffing industry experience.

Our rather unique philosophy is that we do not see ourselves as order fillers, but as problem solvers and partners with our clients in helping to grow their business.