

Bradley Staffing Group
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Hiring Contract Workers? Prep Your Team

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New staff can cause a change in existing employee dynamics. Processes often slow in order to accommodate training needs and to redistribute workload. In addition to operational change is the psychological impact on existing staff, who often feel threatened or experience feelings of insecurity by a sudden influx of new employees.

According to Lisa Quast of *Forbes*, resistance to change is caused by fear of the unknown, mistrust, feelings of loss of control, poor timing, and individual attitude. Management of these factors can make transitions tolerable for everyone involved. Marco Nink and Klaus Welte of *Gallup Business Journal* emphasized the importance of including existing staff in the change process. Additionally, communication and transparency is crucial before, during, and after contract worker deployment.

- Before onboarding new hires, explain the reasons for the need to hire additional staff so that existing employees understand that it is to their benefit, not detriment. A busy season may be anticipated, or demand for services may have expanded. In either case, the indicators are that the company is healthy and productive. Communicating this to existing staff avoids rumor-mongering and relieves insecurities with respect to jobs.
- Once hired, provide adequate training resources for new staff, or fully prepare existing staff for training roles. Anticipate reduced productivity during this short period while new and existing workers readjust to the change. Outline the expectations for new and existing workers so that the additional responsibilities combined with temporary reduced productivity, are not cause for concern.
- Post-transition, gather staff to discuss the process. Did it go smoothly, what could be changed in the future? Seek feedback from permanent staff to find out their needs and to ensure a more rapid and effective adjustment later. Perhaps existing employees were able to learn from contract workers? This may add to the enthusiasm to repeat the process in the future.

As with all matters concerning interpersonal relationships and teamwork, communication and transparency are crucial to any transition. Providing staff with some autonomy and responsibility can encourage their engagement in transition success. Charging individuals with specific tasks, such as mentoring and training incoming staff, can provide opportunities for the recognition of staff performance and efforts.

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