10 Strategies for Controlling Staffing Costs

A lower hourly rate does not always mean a lower total cost. Use these strategies to align staffing with demand while protecting quality, service, and your team's capacity.

PLAN THE WORK AND THE WORKFORCE

1. **Forecast demand.** Review workload, seasonality, vacancies, and planned projects. Separate recurring staffing needs from short-term peaks before approving a hiring plan.

2. **Compare the full cost.** Include wages, benefits, recruiting, training, supervision, overtime, and vendor fees. Compare equivalent hours, skills, and service expectations.

3. **Use flexible coverage deliberately.** Consider temporary or contract support for defined assignments and demand peaks. Set a budget, expected duration, and conversion or exit plan.

4. **Address recurring overtime.** Track overtime by role and cause. Compare additional coverage with the total cost of repeated overtime, delays, and rework.

5. **Hire for essential skills.** Define the outcomes and skills that matter most. Avoid unnecessary requirements that narrow the candidate pool without improving performance.

Make a practical staffing plan

Murray Resources can help you evaluate direct hire, temporary, and temp-to-hire options for your workload.

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Control costs beyond the hire

Small improvements in onboarding, workload design, and retention can prevent avoidable expense throughout an assignment.

IMPROVE EXECUTION AND MEASURE RESULTS

6. **Prepare people to succeed.** Provide systems access, a named trainer, written procedures, and clear safety expectations. Check understanding before independent work begins.

7. **Remove bottlenecks.** Identify tasks that delay an entire process. Add capacity, cross-train employees, or simplify handoffs where the impact is greatest.

8. **Protect retention.** Review workload and pay consistency, act on employee feedback, and make development achievable. Repeated vacancies can erase short-term savings.

9. **Clarify partner responsibilities.** Document recruiting, payroll, benefits, timekeeping, training, and supervision responsibilities. A staffing arrangement does not automatically eliminate every employer obligation.

10. **Review total results.** Track time to fill, attendance, quality, productivity, overtime, and turnover. Use actual results to adjust the staffing mix rather than assuming savings.

Choose one measurable improvement

Set a baseline, name an owner, and review the result in 30 days. Expand what works.

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