

Article:

TEMPORARY STAFF BLESSING OR BLIGHT!

Most organisations employ temporary staff. There are many good commercial reasons for supplementing the core workforce with temporary workers such as meeting seasonal demand for products; covering for absences; meeting an unusual workload; and easing management's workload by outsourcing the 'hiring and firing' process to a recruitment business. Additionally, temporary workers are sometimes paid less than their permanent colleagues and don't receive the normal benefit package and so the employer achieves lower employment costs for part of the workforce. While on face value this latter point may be significant the management flexibility of increasing or decreasing staffing levels at a moments notice will normally far outweighs the cost issue.

It is that cost issue which will fundamentally change on 1st October 2011 when the Agency Workers Regulations are implemented. These Regulations provide the temporary (agency) worker, after 12 weeks in the same role with one employer, basic pay parity with directly employed colleagues, including basic pay, overtime premium, shift allowances, increased annual leave, bonuses linked to the quality and quantity of work individually done and even access to canteens and the right to be advised of permanent vacancies in the company.

Many argue that this is just another level of bureaucracy which companies have to face making life ever more difficult for already very busy managers. Others believe that this change is just putting a wrong right and as more than half of temporary workers work less than 12 weeks on assignment and the Regulations won't apply.

The important issue is that management understands the Regulations and becomes compliant. This is where the Recruitment Agency can bring benefits. Professional agencies should have provided their clients with information on all of the planned changes. They may have made suggestions on the one hand on how costly change may be avoided while on the other they may have worked with the client to put in place arrangements to work with the new Regulations in a cost effective way.

Failure to comply with these Regulations may be very costly for organisations, so if you have any doubts or concerns contact myself or anyone at one of the HR GO Recruitment offices and we will help you put things in order.

Dr Hugh Billot
Director
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