

CONTRACT STAFFING (INTERIM) BUSINESS GAINS MOMENTUM IN RECESSION AFTERMATH

More employers see contingent workers as a permanent solution, says The HealthCare Initiative and MRINetwork®

Denver, CO -- The contingent employment industry is traditionally a leading indicator of post-recession economic conditions and a reliable predictor of future employment trends. Cautious employers hire temps first, hedging their bets on the recovery, recognizing it is easier to scale back if demand doesn't materialize. This cycle is no different, say the contract staffing experts at **MRINetwork**, except this time employers plan to maintain a larger portion of their workforce as contract employees even once business recovers.

"Employers gained some valuable insights during the recession," says Tim Ozier, director of contract staffing at **MRINetwork**. "They learned to refocus on their core business, incorporate automation to increase operational efficiency, and eliminate non-essential services and staff," he says. "They realized that a smaller core workforce that was well trained and technologically astute was more effective and nimble than their pre-recession staff."

Sean Milius, President and CEO of **The HealthCare Initiative** agrees with the increasing trend of contract employees, typically labeled Interim professionals, in the healthcare world. "5 years ago our healthcare clients would do whatever they could to avoid bringing someone, especially in a leadership function, on board in anything but the traditional 'permanent hire'. That trend has changed dramatically just in the last 18 months. "Provider organizations realize there is a lot of talent available to them, but not everyone fits into the typical employee model. There are incredible individuals out there right now willing to take on a contract of 6-24 months, they just like the flexibility of not being tied to an organization long term. The organizations that are open to this form of contingency staffing will have a leg up on their competitors."

"Both companies and workers benefit," says Milius. "Companies increase efficiency and productivity because they can hire quickly to meet production needs and down-size just as quickly when demand drops," he says. "Workers enjoy the benefits of a workplace characterized by project-based assignments, flexible hours, career mobility, and often higher rates of pay. But this nomadic work force signals a new reality that will forever change the way people view their work, their careers, and their relationship with their employer."

"For some time, information technology has employed the greatest number of contract workers," says Milius, "followed by engineering and finance/accounting. Now we're seeing increases in the healthcare portion of the workforce in the form of experience Interim professionals."

Few people realize how large the contract staffing industry has grown. "The entire staffing industry in 2011 is projected at \$113 billion," says Ozier. "Contract staffing is responsible for \$88 billion of that total. And yet only 1.5 percent of all employees in the U.S. are contract or contingent workers. That number is higher in many European countries – near 5 percent – and is trending upward here."

Ozier has seen a decided change in attitudes toward contract employees in his nearly twenty years in the industry, particularly over the past five years. "The skeptical – or even negative – view of contract employees has nearly evaporated," he says. "Being branded a 'job hopper' in many fields used to mean your resume went to the bottom of the pile. Today, it hardly raises a flag, and the resulting range of experience and skill sets can sometimes even be seen as a strength."

As more and more healthcare organizations tap into this newly found pool of talent, the demand will only increase. The HealthCare Initiative is a 3rd generation recruitment firm specializing in Interim and Direct placement since 1974. With over 3,000+ placements to their credit, they have a thorough understanding of the hiring challenges our healthcare systems are facing today.