



Consider Nontraditional Staffing Models

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There are many reasons why communities are employing nontraditional staffing models – cost savings, scheduling flexibility, the need for specialized expertise, and time savings. Following are examples of how nontraditional staffing may be applied in your organization.

Seasonal Activity Levels – During the warm weather months, construction activity increases. Permit clerks, inspectors, and plan review technicians are putting in extra hours and the job becomes more stressful. Residents and builders want their permits approved right away. Similarly, in the summertime, property maintenance violations become more prevalent. Residents and elected officials seek timely action on resident complaints. With reduced staffing levels, communities don't always have the resources available to respond right away. Whether in a full-time or part-time capacity, temporary employees can help fill the void in these situations.

Project Work – A project needs attention, but staff can't get to it because of time constraints or lack of expertise. Examples include: how best to address aging water meters; review of debt restructuring/refinancing; preparing for a bond rating review; developing or updating a Capital Improvement Program; updating a municipal code or comprehensive plan; reviewing personnel practices and systems to ensure compliance with laws and competitiveness with the market. Skilled temporary employees are available to assist with project work.

Short-Term Assignments – When department directors or other staff members retire or take a job elsewhere,

the workload of the remaining staff picks up – often resulting in angst and frustration. It will take at least three months to find a replacement. An executive-level temporary employee can help fill the void in the interim and can assist in vetting candidates for the permanent position.

Coach/Mentor – The local government can't afford what's necessary to attract a seasoned department director. It elects instead to hire a less experienced but promising person who can grow into the job. To help ensure success, a retired local government official (city administrator, director of public works, treasurer, etc.) is brought in to coach and mentor the new employee, and provide technical expertise. Coaching assignments through a temporary agency can be short term or for as long as necessary.

Temp-to-Hire (TTH) – In cases where the local government doesn't have the time, the HR resources, or the candidate outreach capability, a temp-to-hire approach should be considered. Under a TTH situation, a temporary staffing firm will solicit, vet, and present top candidates. The local government will then interview and select a person it feels is best suited for the job. The TTH employee will typically work a set time which is usually at least three months. At the end of the term, the local government will decide if it desires to offer the person a full-time, permanent position.

Outsourcing – Troubled with the high cost of municipal benefits – notably health insurance and pension – many agencies have opted for a permanent outsourced option. These arrangements – full time or part time – are renewed

on an annual basis. Outsourcing can be applied to many positions including support and administrative personnel such as customer service clerks, finance directors, HR managers/generalists, IT, and managers/administrators. Recently retired and in-transition local government professionals, as well as emerging government leaders, are available for outsourced assignments through a temporary staffing agency.

Choosing the Right Firm

Staffing agencies focused on local government know where to go to recruit and vet good workers, including conducting necessary background screenings. Moreover, they are sensitive to the daily fiscal pressures facing local government leaders and understand what makes for a successful candidate in local government.

An established local government staffing firm should serve as a clearinghouse for candidates who are looking for a full-time, part-time, or temporary position in the area, or who can perform the work remotely from an off-site location. Interested communities who need to fill a temporary or permanent position should be able to contact the firm to inquire if they have candidates available for direct hire, temp-to-hire, or an outsourced assignment.

About GovHR/Gov Temps:

GovHR/Gov Temps specializes in recruitment, interim staffing and management, and human resources consulting. Visit GovHRUSA.com or contact Mike Earl at mearl@govhrusa.com