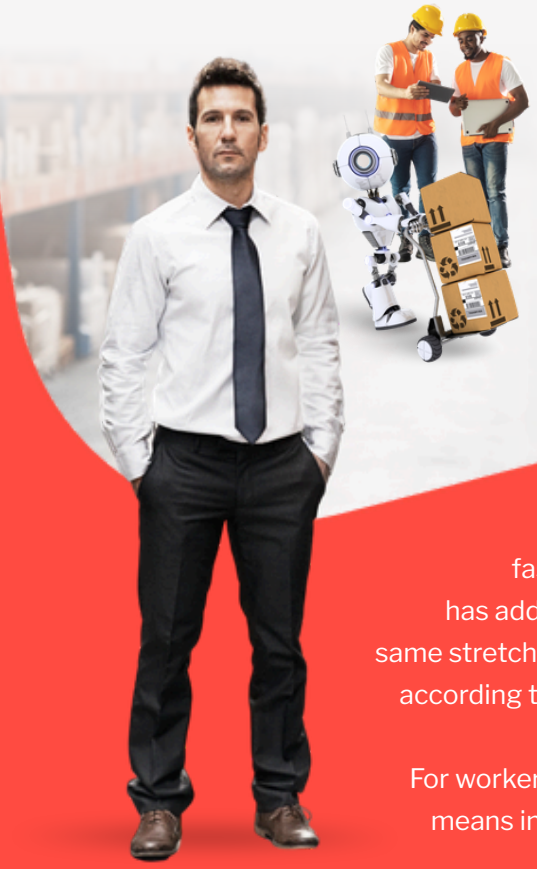
smg*
staffmark group

The Retention Paradox: Your Workforce Is Satisfied. And Still Looking.

High workforce satisfaction can create a false sense of security as labor demand shifts. Staffmark Group's Heart of Work Study reveals the staffing risk hiding beneath the surface, and what employers can do before turnover climbs and fill rates drop.

On paper, 85% job satisfaction sounds like a workforce employers can count on. One layer deeper, the picture changes: 43% of workers are burned out, and 57% say they are likely to look for another job within the next six months. Satisfaction, burnout and intent to leave can all be true at once.



The same gap shows up among temporary and contract workers, who have even greater mobility due to the very nature of contract work. Their satisfaction is similar (83%), but their intent to look for another job is higher (67%).

More Options. More in Demand.

Manufacturing, which relies heavily on temporary labor, shows how fast that mobility can grow. The overall labor market is soft, yet Manufacturing has added 43,000 jobs since June 2026, compared with a 36,000-job loss over the same stretch last year. Job postings are also roughly 23% above their pre-pandemic level, according to the latest Indeed Job Postings Index (JPI) for Production & Manufacturing.

For workers, that means more choices, especially during hiring spikes.For employers, it means increased competition for talent and greater retention risks—making this the time to sharpen both talent attraction and retention strategies.

WWW.STAFFMARK.COM

3 Ways Clients Are Safeguarding Peak Season



+$2/hr.

Temporary shift-wide pay bump across all shifts for the peak period.



$200/wk.

Perfect-attendance bonus paid weekly during crucial weeks.



$500 bonus

"Peak Completion" bonus for perfect attendance through the full peak period.

Keep the Talent You Have. Win the Talent You Need.

Employers can address the reasons workers leave before competing offers arrive, while stepping up their ability to attract new talent. Here are three places to start.

Benchmark Your Pay (Retention)

When pay falls at or below the 50th percentile for the local market, our guidance is that candidate ghosting and turnover can spike, especially given the higher cost of living. Workers are often weighing offers from several agencies or employers at once, so a median rate is relatively easy to beat. Compare your rates with current local-market data and adjust where you fall short.

Speed Up Hiring (Attraction)

When demand rises and competition for talent intensifies, speed matters. For temporary roles, we see the greatest placement success within 24-48 hours after a candidate applies. To capitalize on that window, we recommend hiring models that reduce friction and accelerate decisions: flexible shift selection, same-day offers, and multiple hiring classes each week.

Revisit Hiring Criteria (Attraction)

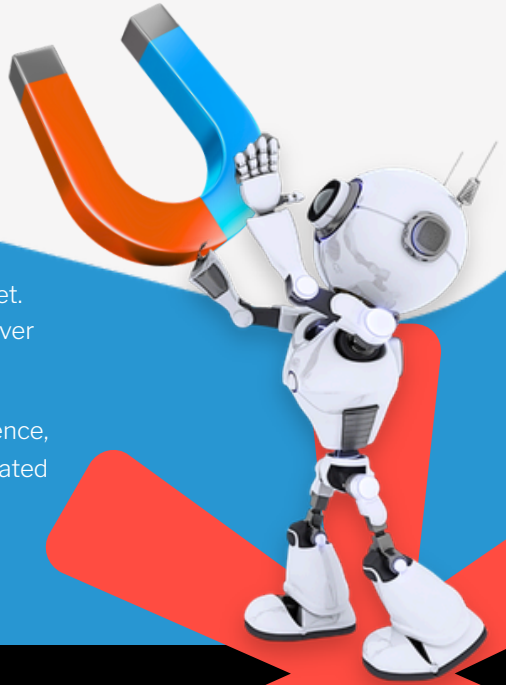
Every added requirement slows hiring inside that 24-48-hour window. Especially for non safety-sensitive positions, review whether each criterion, such as drug screening, is truly relevant. Our data shows that across 82,000+ pre-employment drug screens last year, only 2% failed. While the screen itself is rarely the obstacle, the process can be. When candidates are sent off-site for a lab test, about 1 in 6 never complete it. In other words, more than twice as many lab candidates drop out of the process as fail the test.

Get Ahead of the Exit

TALK TO US IF EITHER OF THESE IS TRUE:

- You are unsure how your pay rates compare with the 50th percentile in your market.
- Your no-show rate has risen or your fill rate has fallen in the last 60 days and turnover is higher than last year.

Staffmark Group helps clients see around the corner, combining labor-market intelligence, competitive pay insights, flexible workforce strategies, recruiting expertise, and dedicated support to attract talent and reduce turnover. Whether the answer is adjusting pay to stay competitive, creating more flexible shifts, adding capacity to relieve burnout, or building a ready pipeline of talent, we help clients move before their workforce does.



smg*

WWW.STAFFMARK.COM