

Privately Held National Staffing



William Brann
CEO

CEOCFO: Mr. Brann, would you tell us the concept behind Staffworks Group?

Mr. Brann: We are a nationwide staffing company that helps companies find good people throughout the country in all different types of skill sets.

CEOCFO: What type of skill sets?

Mr. Brann: Everything from the most basic of general labor positions to light assembly work, quality control inspection, machine operations, forklift drivers, warehouse operations, test-driving automobiles, supportive home care, clerical, accounting and just about anything you can think of.

CEOCFO: How are you able to find and manage people?

Mr. Brann: We have seventeen offices strategically located throughout the Midwest, South and East. These are all recruiting centers that employ fulltime recruiters. We recruit people by a multitude of ways; we get people to come in as they notice our company signs. We are on every internet application out there and every search engine that you can imagine. We are a big user of Career Builder, which is one of our major recruiting tools. We spend a great deal of money with them and we get a great return on it. When we post positions with them, it blasts out to literally thousands of sites. We do a very good job of finding people. Do we find every person for every job? No, but we do our very best to find the right people.

CEOCFO: What is the key to matching people correctly with employers and what do you look for that maybe others in the industry do not recognize is important?

Mr. Brann: It is important that you match up the skilled worker with the right position. We spend a great deal of time listening and understanding our customers' needs. Because Staffworks is different, we custom build our program for every customer. When we bring on a new customer, we sit down and listen and learn their business to understand and identify exactly what they are looking for and how we can help with their employment needs. We then come back and meet with our team to explain what the customers are looking for so we educate our entire staff. We then begin a strategic approach to recruiting and looking for those people. When the applicant arrives at our office, depending upon the type of position that is needed, we spend a great deal of time interviewing the person one on one, doing background checks, drug testing and reference checks; there might be skills testing done based upon the type of position because we want to match the right person with the job. I think we do a better job than most particularly in our industry because there are many staffing companies that do not spend all of this time and money but would rather throw people at an opportunity and hope that it works out. We spend a great deal of time and money recruiting, spending the time to get to know the people and sending those people out. New customers would typically start out by telling us to do the first round of interviews, send the resumes of good candidates and they would then do the next set of interviews and decide on who to hire. We do such a good job that what ends up happening after a while is the customer trusts and believes in us and says they do not need to do the second interviews anymore. They have the confidence in us that we will provide the right people. It goes very well.

CEOCFO: You have several locations and several more in the works. How have you chosen where?

Mr. Brann: We are where we are because we are better than most. We have a clear vision of where our company is and where we want to be so we have made several strategic acquisitions that allow us to grow into markets that we were not in or into the type of employment market that we are not. We made an acquisition that took us into the supportive homecare business in the Midwest and it is going extremely well. It allows us to diversify our company and to be able to offer our companies more services. I believe that we attract very good workers both temporary as well as internal. We do a good job recruiting and people like working for us. We treat our people like human beings. One of the big comments we hear all the time from our workers that are out in the field is that you guys treat us the best of anybody. Others treat them

like a machine but we treat them like human beings because we know that they are our greatest assets. If somebody comes to work for us and we assign them to a job, we are going to put them in the right place where we believe they are going to do well and be happy. They will then come back and we stay in touch with them. We develop relationships with them and they appreciate that. They like working for Staffworks Group.

CEOCFO: *Would a company typically utilize your service for all of the positions that you provide people for or is it more picking and choosing?*

Mr. Brann: It all depends on the type of company. Many of our manufacturing type employers will use us for all of their manufacturing jobs other than their managerial positions. Clearly, they will also use us for their clerical work. It could be a quality control inspection company that inspects parts for automobiles so they will not ask for just a few of the people, they turn over all the hiring needs to Staffworks Group and we do all the hiring for them for all positions in that plant. We help them operate more efficiently and effectively because in the last down turn, many companies got rid of their human resource departments or if they did not, they downsized them. Many of these companies are having a hard time finding people. We become their human resource partner. One of the cool things about Staffworks Group is if you want one person we can help you and if you want a thousand people we can help. We are not like the big nationals where they are very picky about who they choose as a new customer. As long as it is a safe customer and good place to work, we will happily take small, medium or large. We just want good customers.

“We custom build our program to meet the company needs. We do not provide a boilerplate product. We truly learn and understand your business. We build a program to help you, the employer, make your company more profitable. We want to help you so that you are not spending all your time on daily employment situations. We want you to be concentrating on growing your business and profits.” - William Brann

CEOCFO: *What trends are you seeing in the labor market today?*

Mr. Brann: I am seeing a tremendous swing towards companies that are relying upon staffing companies for all their hiring needs. I have been doing this for 22 years and I have never seen a stronger move because of many things. I indicated that companies downsized and they did not have as much ability to recruit, costs have gone up and we have a thing called Obamacare out there. Many companies just cannot stay on top of the regulatory requirements that DC puts on companies; we take over all of that for them. Where we used to service a company that might only want five or ten people, they are giving us their entire plant and saying hire all of them, we want you to handle everything. We are seeing that increasing significantly. In the past we might average ten people a day at a customer, we now have a hundred people a day.

CEOCFO: *Are there different regulations in different states?*

Mr. Brann: The regulations change state by state both for taxation as well as employment laws. For a company to try to stay on top of all these regulations from taxation to labor laws to harassment and everything else, it is very difficult. Staffworks Group has a large human resources and risk management department, to manage all these responsibilities for our customers.

CEOCFO: *How do you help with citizenship verification?*

Mr. Brann: We do all the verifications. When a person comes in our door, they go through a series of tests. They have to make an application with us. We then do background checks and verify through e-Verify which is a federal system and we verify that they have legal citizenship in the United States. The I-9s are maintained by us because we are the employer of record so that is one of the great benefits that we offer to our customers is as we are the employer we maintain the employee files, we maintain all the proper forms and have all the responsibility to all the unemployment compensation. We provide all the worker compensation coverage and we provide all the insurance benefits. It is as though you are hiring an entirely new department yet you are outsourcing it, which is a big move in our country.

CEOCFO: *Over and above the industry downturn, do you find that because so much is outsourced, it is becoming more natural to do so?*

Mr. Brann: Yes I do. There is a tremendous move for companies to outsource as much as they can because they are operating efficiently and as lean as possible. I am seeing outsourcing bigger than I have ever seen before.

CEOCFO: *What do you look for in your people?*

Mr. Brann: We are looking for people that want to join an exciting and fun company. We are looking for people that want to grow with the company. Many of them have seen what Staffworks has done over the last 20 years but we continue to

grow at an outstanding pace. We were nominated once again by INC Magazine as one of the fastest-growing companies in the US. We do a good job of hiring people, we promote within and people join us and stay with us for a long time.

CEOCFO: *What challenges do you see ahead?*

Mr. Brann: The biggest thing I am always watching out for is regulations and all the continued red tape that keeps getting passed on to employers and us. It is more difficult now to be an employer; we live in such a litigious country that employees want to sue people all the time for anything and any reason. It is just staying on top of everything possible to make sure you are running the company the right way and employing the people properly, doing the right things and you are compliant with all the regulations.

CEOCFO: *What are your day-to-day activities as CEO?*

Mr. Brann: My primary focus for the company is to look for the vision and future of the organization. I lead the company on our strategic growth and plans, primarily our acquisitions plans, which we are very aggressive on right now. We have an offer to buy a large company right now and we are very excited. We expect our company to be three times larger than it is in another year. That is my primary goal. My second goal is to make sure all of my managers and my senior managers are running the company effectively and staying on budget as well as providing a good workplace for all of our people.

CEOCFO: *Are you aggressive now because of all the opportunity or because you are in a position to do so or both?*

Mr. Brann: It is both but really just because the market is so red hot. The staffing industry is just skyrocketing in growth. There is a bunch of owners that are getting up in age or they just want to cash out so they have grown their business to a certain point. There are many companies that do not want to get too big because it becomes a much more difficult challenge to manage a big company with all the regulations that are out there today. We are in a very strong position. We have an excellent acquisition team that I have put together as well as capital so we have ambitious plans for growth and we know that the market and industry is going to continue and we know Obamacare is just going to continue to push more and more companies to outsource their HR needs. I see a long strong future for our industry.

CEOCFO: *What is the key to having employees in so many locations and what is the key to maintaining the culture you want as you grow?*

Mr. Brann: We brought in some strong senior management that is responsible for overseeing what we call the field operations for our company. It is those peoples responsibility to work with and maintain the consistency throughout our organization to make sure that each one of our offices are doing what they are supposed to be doing, following through and providing training and providing onsite management to encourage and work with all of our field personnel to make sure they are following all the corporate policies and doing all the right things with the customers.

CEOCFO: *Why choose Staffworks Group?*

Mr. Brann: Because we are better than anybody else. We custom build our program to meet the company needs. We do not provide a boilerplate product. We truly learn and understand your business. We build a program to help you, the employer, make your company more profitable. We want to help you so that you are not spending all your time on daily employment situations. We want you to be concentrating on growing your business and profits. Allow us to handle all the HR and employment needs freeing you up so that you can go out and grow your business. That is our moniker and that is what we want our customers to know.

Interview conducted by: Lynn Fosse, Senior Editor, CEOCFO Magazine



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