

5 Questions Every Contractor Should Ask Before Partnering With a Staffing Firm

Not all staffing firms are built for the trades. Here's how to separate the ones who understand your work from the ones who'll waste your time.



WHY THIS MATTERS

The wrong staffing partner costs you more than a bad hire.

When you're running crews, managing timelines, and keeping clients happy, the last thing you need is a recruiter sending you unvetted warm bodies. A bad placement can derail a project, damage client relationships, and cost your business tens of thousands of dollars.

But finding a trades staffing firm that actually gets it — one that speaks your language, understands certification requirements, and prioritizes fit over fill rate — takes more than a Google search.

These five questions cut through the noise. Ask them before you sign anything.

"We don't send warm bodies. We send the right person — credential-verified, reference-checked, and ready to contribute on day one."

— **Bravo Talent Group**

1 Do you specialize in skilled trades, or do you place everyone?

A generalist staffing firm that places accountants on Monday and electricians on Tuesday doesn't have the trade-specific knowledge to vet candidates properly. Ask this question directly — and push past the sales pitch.

A specialist will know what certifications your tradespeople need, understand union vs. non-union distinctions, and have an active network in your specific trades — not just a résumé database full of anyone who's ever held a tool.

WHAT TO LISTEN FOR

They should name specific trades and specific certifications — not just say "we have experience in construction." Ask how many electricians or HVAC techs they placed in the last 90 days.

2

How do you verify credentials and work history?

This is where most staffing firms fall short. It's not enough to accept a résumé at face value. In the trades, certifications expire, licenses get revoked, and work history can be fabricated. You need a firm that does the homework.

At minimum, a credible trades staffing firm should verify: state licensure, certification currency (OSHA, NATE, EPA 608, etc.), previous employer references (not just HR confirmation), and relevant safety training records.

WHAT TO LISTEN FOR

Ask specifically: "Can you walk me through your vetting process?" A vague answer like "we check references" is a red flag. You want a step-by-step process with verifiable checkpoints.

3

What does your retention rate look like at 90 days?

Fill rate is a vanity metric. What matters is whether the person they place is still on your crew 90 days later — performing, integrating well, and adding value. A high fill rate with a poor retention rate means they're good at making placements, not good placements.

Firms that prioritize fit over speed will naturally have higher retention. They should be able to give you a real number — and back it up with a guarantee if they believe in their own process.

WHAT TO LISTEN FOR

A strong staffing partner should offer a 90-day retention guarantee. Bravo Talent Group's actual retention rate is 94% — and we back every placement with a guarantee. If they hesitate at this question, keep shopping.

4

What's your typical time-to-fill, and what drives that number?

Speed matters — you can't leave a job site short-staffed. But time-to-fill without context is meaningless. A firm that promises to fill any role in 24 hours is either working from a pool of pre-screened candidates (good) or sending you whoever's available (dangerous).

Ask what's behind that timeline. Do they maintain an active bench of vetted candidates? Do they have relationships with tradespeople who are currently employed but open to the right opportunity? The answer tells you a lot about how they actually operate.

WHAT TO LISTEN FOR

The right answer involves a candidate network built before you called, not a reactive search that starts when you submit a job order. Bravo places most roles within 48 hours — because we're already talking to the right people.

5

How do you handle a placement that doesn't work out?

Even the best firms have placements that don't stick. What separates good partners from bad ones is how they respond when it happens. Do they have a clear replacement guarantee? Do they take accountability, or do they point fingers?

A firm that's confident in their process will stand behind their placements. One that hedges, adds exceptions to every guarantee, or makes it hard to exercise your rights is telling you something important about their confidence in their own work.

WHAT TO LISTEN FOR

Look for a written guarantee with clear terms — not verbal assurances. Understand the replacement timeline, any cost implications, and whether the process is simple or buried in conditions.



Ready to Work With a Firm That Knows the Trades?

Bravo Talent Group specializes in 12+ skilled trades. Every candidate is credential-verified before they reach your desk. 94% 90-day retention rate. Most placements within 48 hours.

94%

90-Day Retention

48hr

Avg. Time to Place

12+

Trades Covered

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