



2016
FASTEST-GROWING
STAFFING FIRMS
INTERVIEW SERIES

Presented by



Learn How the Fastest-Growing Staffing Firms Operate: 5 Interviews with Industry Leaders

Staffing Industry Analysts recently released their list of [2016's fastest growing staffing firms](#).

We interviewed executives at five of these top companies to get insight into just how they do it. Here are the secrets to their success.

Presented by:



How Do They Do It? Source4Teachers is Inspired by Deep Industry Knowledge, Committed to Effective Tech Solutions, and Driven by Excellence



Kendley Davenport, CEO of Source4TEachers credits a few key factors for his company's success: a team inspired by deep industry knowledge, a commitment to creating effective technological solutions, and an unparalleled devotion to excellence.

Why did you join Source4Teachers?

I came to Source4Teachers with a personal dream: to build a complete educational managed services company. We wanted to be more than just a last-minute staffing company, filling gaps in the K-12 market ad hoc. Our vision was to serve as an extension of the HR department for the K-12 market. We've done just that.

Our comprehensive approach is appealing to school districts. We handle substitute management and staff anticipated full-time vacancies (such as maternity leave, illness, etc.). We also handle overall recruiting for school districts for full-time staff. Instead of working with six different service providers to get these services, we provide a one-stop shop. This makes coordination more efficient and delivery of services that much easier.

We're also driven to be the best in the industry for what we do. We aim to deliver a higher value to our customers. We're all about high-quality touches and high-quality reporting, and that kind of dedicated customer service and analytics really sets us apart.

What were the main factors that drove your success over the last year?

It's been a year of investing in our infrastructure -- in our people and in our technology. We have worked to bring in only the best people, those with dozens of years of experience in education. And we have worked hard to sharpen our daily operations, eliminate procedural blind spots, and invest in the right technology. There are six main tools that drive our ability to anticipate our customers' needs and to respond rapidly:

1. Our online substitute management software allows us to communicate absences and fills in a very timely manner.
2. Our business intelligence software leverages our entire database to define patterns. This data helps us make rational business decisions around recruiting and placement.
3. Our inbound marketing platform helps us to actively communicate with prospects and clients and to ensure that everyone is on the same page. It also has significant analytic capabilities that help us gain further insight into how to best contact our prospects and leads. We recruit faster and we recruit higher quality candidates because of the sophisticated, segmented data the platforms provides.

Utilizing a multichannel approach -- text, email, and phone calls -- allows us to have an ongoing dialogue with all our employees.

4. Our text messaging software and other communication mechanisms allow us to talk to a lot of people quickly. We have 31,000 substitutes, and in order to keep them engaged, we rely on automated communication. Utilizing a multichannel approach -- text, email, and phone calls -- allows us to have an ongoing dialogue with all our employees.
5. Our CRM helps us keep up with and track communications with customers, be very timely in the delivery of our services, and nip any problems or concerns in the bud. Because of our CRM, our customers always know where they stand, and we always have a very clear picture of their needs.

6. Our business utility system allows us to tailor invoicing and payroll to the unique, complex financial needs of our school districts.

All of these systems are integrated and easy-to-use, and they make our team more efficient. We're able to anticipate substitute needs, help make school administration's life easier, and make sure, no matter what, the kids in those schools are getting the instruction they need.

We're also able to automatically reach out via text and email to substitutes at crucial moments in their placements and careers. We send an automated message to find out how their first day was, what problem spots they ran into, and how we can make their second day better. We touch base with regular subs who haven't worked in more than five days to see if they need positions or guidance, or if they are off the market.

What are your biggest day-to-day challenges?

Our main challenges are industry challenges. There's a big teaching shortage right now and that trickles down to a substitute shortage. But, we address both problems head-on. By giving our teachers the opportunity to try out different teaching settings in a low-risk way, we both provide the quality subs that are needed today and help shape future teachers. For example, new teachers can try different grade levels, different subjects, and different school settings to find out what they're most passionate about.

Another challenge we face is that teaching is a unique profession. A sub may not feel welcome at first or may find that teaching is harder than they expected. So we work to make sure our teachers are nurtured, competent, and well-trained so they are ready to face any challenges that come along.

How would you describe your leadership style?

I believe that if you treat your employees well, if you take care of them, they will take care of your clients. From there, you will see growth and profit. All of that profit is shared with all the stakeholders. We see ourselves as one big team, working together to get things done.

I also believe it's important for us all to have fun while striving to do our best. We don't take ourselves too seriously and yet we hold ourselves accountable. That combination makes for a great work environment. It means that our team isn't afraid to take risks -- we understand that failure is acceptable and part of the learning process.

What do you think sets your company apart?

At the end of the day, we're a people business. When you're in staffing, it's about the human touch. Our customized, unique, and thorough understanding of the needs and pains of the K-12 market enable us to solve their problems cost-effectively. So our formula for success is a deep understanding of our customers combined with the strong infrastructure that allows us to deliver our services quickly and efficiently.

We're continually working to grow and improve, too. That's why we'll be talking again this time next year, when we're at the top of the fastest-growing firm list!

About Source4Teachers

[Source4Teachers](#) was established in 2000 with a vision to improve the continuity and quality of the classroom experience for students by providing highly skilled substitute personnel to school districts. The company is a leading provider of substitute staffing services, filling more than 6,500 daily and long-term vacancies each day for over 250 clients in a variety of states throughout the U.S.

Source4Teachers assumes the responsibilities of recruiting, credentialing, training, managing, and evaluating school districts' substitute teachers, substitute paraprofessionals, and substitute support staff. We improve operational efficiencies, enhance student productivity, and deliver ample cost savings.

How Do They Do It? Health Carousel Prizes a Driven Team, Savvy Tech Decisions, and a Modern Communication Strategy



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TextUs + StaffingHub

CEO Bill DeVille chocks Health Carousel's success up to a driven, engaged team, savvy technology decisions, and a modern communication strategy. Read on for more insight.

Why did you start Health Carousel?

To start a successful company, you need to find a good market. When I was deciding what direction to go, I noticed two megatrends developing: the expansion of the healthcare market and the rise of the contingent worker. This made healthcare staffing a particularly good place to be.

I started Health Carousel in 2004, and since then, these two trends have continued. Largely due to the Affordable Care Act and aging Baby Boomers, the healthcare sector is expanding rapidly -- it's expected to make up 20% of the GDP by 2020. And the 'Uberization' of the worker is one of the most significant macrotrends in our current economy.

What were the main factors that drove your success over the last year?

It's no surprise that the healthcare staffing market is white hot. And we're outperforming even industry-standard growth rates -- we've had a 100% growth rate for the last four years. There are three primary factors driving our success: our people, our use of technology, and our communications strategy.

First, we're dedicated to putting the right people in the right chairs. We've built a great culture that's a magnet for both internal and external talent. Our in-house team is motivated and engaged, and they're all great believers in our mission.

Second, we make sure the technology we use helps us to work faster, more effectively, and more efficiently. So, we're 100% mobile, which frees our team from their desks. We have the latest computer systems, which helps us work faster and more efficiently. And we use marketing automation software, which keeps our messaging on point and expands our outreach.

And finally, we have a very significant push to leverage technology to communicate with our target audience. We know it's not always convenient for our clinicians to talk on the phone. It's crucial that we communicate in ways that satisfy our clinical staff. So, we do a lot with email, text messaging, and social media. And what's more, we measure the effectiveness of our all of our outreach efforts and adjust to each individual's needs.

What are your biggest day-to-day challenges?

We have more demand than we're able to satisfy. There's a big war for talent, and everyone is fighting over the same finite supply. So, we're recruiting in a very competitive environment.

Also, our growth rate itself presents a challenge -- we're continually developing, moving, growing into new office spaces. We've hired more than 90 people just this year, so we are constantly recruiting, interviewing, and training to bring new employees up to speed on the company and our culture.

We're driven simply by making other people's lives better.

What inspires your team?

Our team is motivated by the opportunity to do something great. There's a social mission to improve patient care in the United States, and we are a part of that. Clinical staff are dedicated to saving lives, improving the quality of patient care in a tangible way. By sourcing the best talent, we have an opportunity to be a part of that larger mission. We're driven simply by making other people's lives better.

How would you describe your leadership style?

My leadership style is probably a little unusual for a CEO -- I'm a collaborative delegator. I think most CEOs want to control everything and want to be in charge, but I'm pretty happy to delegate.

I believe that if you want to get the best results you need to have buy-in from your team. They need to help build strategy. They need to create the future and culture of the company, to take pride in it. So, I spend my time supporting my team's initiatives, helping them solve complex challenges, and making sure we have strategic alignment.

What do you think sets your company apart?

Let's be honest -- the typical staffing firm is a soul-sucking environment. They work in a sad office space, they are driven by cold metrics, like number of phone calls per day, and they may even work in a backstabbing environment.

We're driven to be the opposite of that.

Our office space is welcoming and collaborative. Our team is driven by a shared vision. And everyone feels involved and heard.

We're dedicated to working hard and playing hard. We just finished a summer Olympics competition. We just held a competition to see which of our teams could reach 55,000 steps first. We encourage volunteerism, and sometimes we hold spontaneous planking contests. We strive to be one of the funnest places to work.

Once people come to work for us, they rarely leave.

About Health Carousel

In October 2004, [Health Carousel](#) recognized the workforce challenges facing U.S. healthcare organizations and developed solutions to help them manage these challenges effectively. Health Carousel operates separately branded divisions that offer distinct services to help U.S. healthcare organizations meet temporary and long-term hiring needs.

PassportUSA helps its clients overcome the shortage and maldistribution of registered nurses, rehabilitation therapists, and medical laboratory professionals throughout the United States. Tailored Healthcare Staffing (THS) provides staffing solutions to help organizations meet temporary hiring needs due to seasonal demand fluctuations, leaves of absence, and projects. Next Medical Staffing provides temporary and direct placement of physicians, advanced practice nurses, and allied health professionals as well as travel nurse staffing.

How Do They Do It? Dedicated Nursing Associates Prioritizes Right-Fit Employees, Drives Accountability with Clear Goals, and Fuels Engagement with Innovative Tactics

The graphic features a group photo of diverse healthcare professionals in various uniforms, standing outdoors. To the right of the photo is the DNA logo, which includes the text "DNA" in a large, stylized font, followed by "Dedicated Nursing Associates, Inc." and a tagline "WE HONOR THE ART OF NURSING". Below the photo is a badge that reads "2016 FASTEST-GROWING STAFFING FIRMS INTERVIEW SERIES" with logos for TextUs and StaffingHub. The background of the graphic is a light gray with a white geometric pattern of interconnected dots and lines.

To drive growth, Dedicated Nursing Associates President and CEO Craig Fusting prioritizes right-fit internal and external employees, drives accountability with clear goals, and fuels engagement with innovative tactics.

Why did you start Dedicated Nursing Associates?

I have worked as a temp and as a recruiter. I was inspired by those experiences to create the same opportunities for part-time and temporary employees that full-time employees have, but with greater flexibility.

A nurse wrote me a letter once. She said, "I've been working in the nursing field for 30 years. I got so sick of missing out on life, of missing holidays and birthdays. I was about ready to quit. Then, I found your company -- I work as often as I want, whenever I want. I haven't missed any birthdays. That flexibility has energized me -- I love my job again. I may stay in the field for another 4 or 5 years."

We all know there's a big nursing shortage. Here's one more nurse who isn't going to leave the profession. We have the opportunity to benefit part-time and contingent employees and help out a field with such a significant shortage.

What were the main factors that drove your success over the last year?

First and foremost, our employees drive our success. When we started our company, we had a good team, but we didn't have a great team. As we've found our identity, we've realized the individuals who fit into our culture. We've hired the employees who will not only buy into our business but enjoy what they're doing. As soon as you can identify those true players, you're really going to succeed.

We set clear expectations and goals, and we give the each employee the tools to reach those goals. We don't try to micromanage our employees -- we give them room to show us what they can do.

Second, we've focused this year on accountability. We break things down so every employee knows exactly what's expected of them. Accountability is not just about whether or not tasks get done. It's about keeping productivity aligned with strategy. We set clear expectations and goals, and we give the each employee the tools to reach those goals. We don't try to micromanage our employees -- we give them room to show us what they can do.

And third, we really work to engage our employees. We have different team and individual bonuses, contests, and promotions. We give Caribbean vacations and cars to employees who win contests based on performance. And sure, it's fun to get vacations and cars, but these are part of our larger vision: we really strive for a work-life balance. We want people to work as hard as possible when they are here and to really enjoy their lives when they're outside of the office.

What inspires your team?

We try to get our employees out of their comfort zone. You don't truly understand your employees until you see them perform in unexpected situations. They may surprise you, go above and beyond what you ever expected from them.

We go on a retreat each quarter. Most recently, it was a combination of the Great Race and a scavenger hunt. Teams had tasks they had to complete across two states and race to get to a mountain in the middle of Virginia. They had to dress up as rock stars or superheroes and help old ladies do their grocery shopping, help folks wash their windows at the gas station -- small acts of community service like that. The greatest thing was watching them work together. These were managers from different offices who had never met before. They had to problem solve, push the limit, and move out of their comfort zones. That experience alone has improved manager communication 110% and did wonders for our teamwork.

We really emphasize the importance of communication. The more you get your employees engaged, not just with the company, but with each other, the more your organization will grow.

What are your biggest day-to-day challenges?

Finding enough qualified employees, both internal and external, to keep up with demand. We're very selective in our hiring on both ends. We're hiring for hospitals and long-term care homes. We have to make sure that the employees we hire would be the people we would want taking care of our own family members. So, we're definitely picky and the same is true with our interior staff. I find there are mainly two types of employees: comfortable and hungry. We want hungry employees. We only want the best.

About Dedicated Nursing Associates

[Dedicated Nursing Associates](#) (DNA) is a leader in the healthcare staffing industry. They are a medical staffing and home care firm headquartered in Murrysville, PA, just outside of Pittsburgh. DNA also has eleven offices that service all fifty states.

Their team of experienced consultants has over 75 years of combined experience in the staffing industry, and over 65 years of combined experience in the medical staffing industry. They strive to locate only the most qualified and experienced personnel in the industry. At DNA, they understand the needs of both their clients and their employees.

How Do They Do It? SearchPros Solutions Values Process, Teamwork, and Hands-on Leadership



In this interview, CEO and co-founder of SearchPros Solutions Myla Ramos discusses her firm's first act of generosity, the role of process and teamwork in growth, and the importance of hands-on leadership.

Why did you start SearchPros Solution?

My two business partners and I were all working at a staffing agency that was going through lot of mergers and acquisitions. Over the years, we'd had five or six different company names on the door.

One payday, the Friday before Christmas, we got word from corporate that no one's paychecks were coming. The long line of temps in the lobby, waiting for that crucial check right before the holidays, wouldn't be paid. People started crying. They were devastated.

So, the three of us went down the line, one by one, and talked to them. *How much money do you have in your checking account? How much do you need?* We lent them everything we had. We cleaned out our personal savings accounts.

And that evening, instead of going home to our spouses to tell them we had given away all our money right before Christmas, the three of us went out to drinks and started talking. We realized that we did all the work at the agency, and we took care of the employees. The client and candidate connections were with us. Instead of working in an office where the name on the door is constantly changing, we could start our own firm. And that's just what we did.

That was 11 years ago. Now we're in 9 countries and have over 2,000 contract workers.

What were the main factors that have driven your growth?

We're successful because we always give our clients exactly what they want. We've grown from a mom-and-pop admin staffing company to a full-blown global MSP -- because that's what our clients needed. *No* was never an option, and failure was never an option.

We're successful because we always give our clients exactly what they want.

In 11 years, we've never lost a customer and I think that speaks volumes to the quality of our service and the strength of our dedication.

What are your biggest day-to-day challenges and how do you tackle them?

Employment laws and healthcare regulations change so quickly. The compliance component is really difficult to keep up with. So, we work to remain knowledgeable, to seek out information. No one in staffing is an island -- we hire experts to help us understand, to navigate the waters and make sure clients and candidates are protected.

Technology is also a blessing and a curse. I've been in the industry for 25 years. In the beginning, you would take a customer out to lunch, you would talk face-to-face to understand exactly what they wanted. Then, you would have a week to find the perfect candidate.

Now, with VMSeS and the fast-paced world of talent acquisition, our metrics are measured in *minutes*. The difference between landing a client and missing out entirely can be a single minute. So there's a pressure to keep at it constantly while maintaining high quality.

So, to remain fast-paced and on the mark, you need to have internal checks and balances. These come in the form of detailed, shared processes that everyone follows, from the greenest recruiter to the founders. It doesn't matter what tools you use, as long as you have buy-in from the entire team. We make sure everyone is on board and that we all have a shared picture of what successful follow through looks like.

How would you describe your leadership style?

What makes us different from a lot of other staffing agencies is that management does everything that the recruiters do, and then some. I staff and recruit, too, so when I ask my recruiters to source for a client, it's not out of some general idea. It's because I can do it, too. It's easier to lead because each of us has done every role in the agency. We understand what it takes to get the job done.

What do you think sets your company apart?

I think it's perseverance and hard work ethic. The three of us have worked side-by-side for over a decade, and we work right next to all our staff. We're very hands-on. I know and have met all of our major customers. We don't have a marketing group or any outreach department. All of our growth is organic. This sets us apart from a larger company, where the recruiters may not even know the president or CEO.

About SearchPros Solutions

[SearchPros](#) is a full service provider of human capital and workforce solutions management with a commitment to client service that is unsurpassed in the industry. The SearchPros team is a proud recipient of the highest rating from Dun and Bradstreet, scoring in the top 2% nationwide for past performance against all others in the same industry for Reliability, Cost, Order Accuracy, Delivery/Timeliness, Quality, Business Relations, Personnel, Customer Support and Responsiveness within our NAICS codes.

SearchPros innovative approach is to help their clients build unique and dedicated teams through open communications and a fanatical approach to documentation. For our clients looking to shift complete administration and management of staff augmentation services while retaining control, SearchPros provides a comprehensive range of human capital management services, including Managed Service Programs (MSP), Vendor on Premise (VOP), staff augmentation for all labor categories, and more.

How Do They Do It? Phaidon International Propels Internal and External Employees to Lasting Success



Harry Youtan, Group Managing Director of Phaidon International's Americas division, likens his company's culture to a rocketship that propels internal and external employees alike into lasting, mobilizing careers. How do they do it? Read on.

Why did you join Phaidon International?

Since 2004, we've grown into an international business with just north of 400 staff across North America, Europe, and Asia. We're uniquely balanced in our approach. Our business is permanent-recruitment centric: we operate at about 80-89% permanent staffing and the rest is contingent.

77% of our business is on repeat, a stat that shows the strength of our client buy-in.

There's always going to be a need for highly skilled staff to do highly skilled jobs. We take a very proactive approach to sourcing individuals. We also use a large and seasoned network of individual candidates and key into the factors that will create long-standing relationships. In fact, 77% of our business is on repeat, a stat that shows the strength of our client buy-in.

What were the main factors that drove your success over the last year?

We've been successful for a few reasons.

Our business model is strong. We look to create long-standing, strategic relationships with clients. Our growth is 99% organic, and our recruitment is quite aggressive. We are shaped by our core values in all the talent we pursue: loyalty, character, and ability. As a result, our service, delivery, and speed are much better than our competitors.

We are not trying to be the master of everything. We operate within thin, deep verticals (financial, energy, technical, and pharmaceutical services), so our knowledge is quite a bit higher than our competitors.

We also make sure that our employees remain very engaged -- we have only a 3% attrition rate. We tend to hire motivated, driven graduates who want to work in a sales environment.

We also look to build personal relationships with candidates, to create not just employees but stakeholders. We reach out to our candidates in current roles at least once a month. So, when and if they do start looking for another role, they turn to us. The candidates who we place permanently are our biggest proponents.

What are your biggest day-to-day challenges?

In general, the increase in MSPs and RPOs makes them a more significant source of competition for us. They are constantly trying to pull business from recruiters. So, we focus on ensuring that our verticals are very thin and desirable.

You have to be dynamic and innovative to thrive in our business. The sought-after skill set changes rapidly over the space of just a few years. We seek not to diversify our focus but instead to continually evolve.

Our other challenge is technology. As the result of increased recruitment technology like LinkedIn, companies can go direct, and candidates are being picked up quickly. We want to scale and we want to scale quickly, so we always need internal talent. Sourcing the high quality of people who we want to hire is always difficult.

How would you describe your leadership style?

I think that in recruitment in general, there's a tendency for leaders to choose a more dictatorial leadership style. I don't believe that style works for the business we operate in or for the world of recruitment.

Instead, I focus on coaching. We show people the way and coach them to be what we need. We work *with* people rather than *through* them and model the loyalty we want to create in our consultants.

What inspires your team?

Our consultants view us as a rocket ship. If you are offered a seat on a rocket ship, you don't ask which one, you just get on. There's a general consensus among the people who we hire at Phaidon that we offer very attractive mobilization and global opportunities.

In terms of engaging with candidates, we operate at a very high level. Each month, we hold a meet up to educate candidates around industry practices. For example, we've focused on the unique challenges women face in tech industries, hiring veterans in finance, and hiring diversity in pharmaceuticals. We tackle topics that we want to be known for and that we want candidates to know about.

What do you think sets your company apart?

We have a clear vision and we strive to be inspirational for all of our employees. Phaidon truly is a rocket ship that moves forward with incredible speed and clear vision every day.

Along with that, I really work with the best people in recruitment. The talent we have is unparalleled - they are always striving for bigger, better, more. To have that exist across all 150 consultants is a wonderful thing. To see everyone moving in the same direction every day is incredible.

About Phaidon International

[Phaidon International](#) is a global staffing group with 8 micro-specialist recruitment brands. They help organizations identify, attract, and secure the best talent for their requirements across 4 key market verticals: Financial Services, Energy, Technical, and Professional Services.

Since Phaidon was established in 2004, the group has enjoyed a compound annual growth rate in excess of 30% year on year, achieving over a decade of profitable growth. Since inception the business rationale has been to anticipate and then serve industry sectors which depend on and value rare talent. Today they are proud to deliver excellence to clients in over 60 countries through 8 niche brands who have won over 54 independent awards.

Want more on what makes the fastest-growing staffing firms tick? Check out [7 Habits of Highly Effective Staffing Firms](#), co-sponsored by [StaffingHub](#) and [TextUs](#).

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