

# Tips

## Recruiting Hispanic Laborers

**E**ditor's note: We asked Terry Foley of Foley Enterprises in Austin, Texas, for advice on how to recruit Hispanic employees successfully. Foley Enterprises helps businesses obtain temporary work permits from Mexico. Here are Foley's pointers:

- **Get temporary work visas** – Contact an agent or attorney familiar with the H-2B visa program for temporary seasonal labor visas so you can recruit labor from Mexico legally.
- **Get involved** – Don't depend solely on an outside source to recruit for you. Use the source to help make an initial contact and preliminary screening, but don't depend totally on the recruiter.
- **Recruit from within** – Use a trusted employee who has permanent or legal status in the United States to find recruits. Or contact local Hispanic community programs (chambers of commerce, consulates, churches) and work through them to find individuals or groups who have contact with family and/or friends who would like to work legally in the United States.

Recruiting this way may help with personal issues such as housing, transportation and acclimation to your area. New employees/recruits are more likely to stay if they are in a community that they are familiar.

- **Meet and greet** – Make an effort to send a company representative to the border to greet your new employees. Having this representative meet your new employees works both ways.

Employees coming into the United States for the first time will be intimidated — if not completely terrified. Meeting them can help them alleviate the anxiety, but the company can also ensure that the recruits get the correct transportation to their destinations.

- **Spanglish** – Make some effort to increase your communication with your recruits. Most likely, they speak little or no English, so have a translator available as much as possible to keep the lines of communication open. There are many translation services available not only for work issues, but personal issues as well. If a recruit is unhappy with living conditions, he or she needs to be able to communicate with someone for a solution.

- **Planning for the future** – With a successful season of recruitment, you can probably plan on the next year being successful because you will likely have a loyal group of employees who will be willing to return and may know of more people who would like to work for you. ■

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