RAISE REPORT
Intelligence

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From Pickup Squad to The Majors:

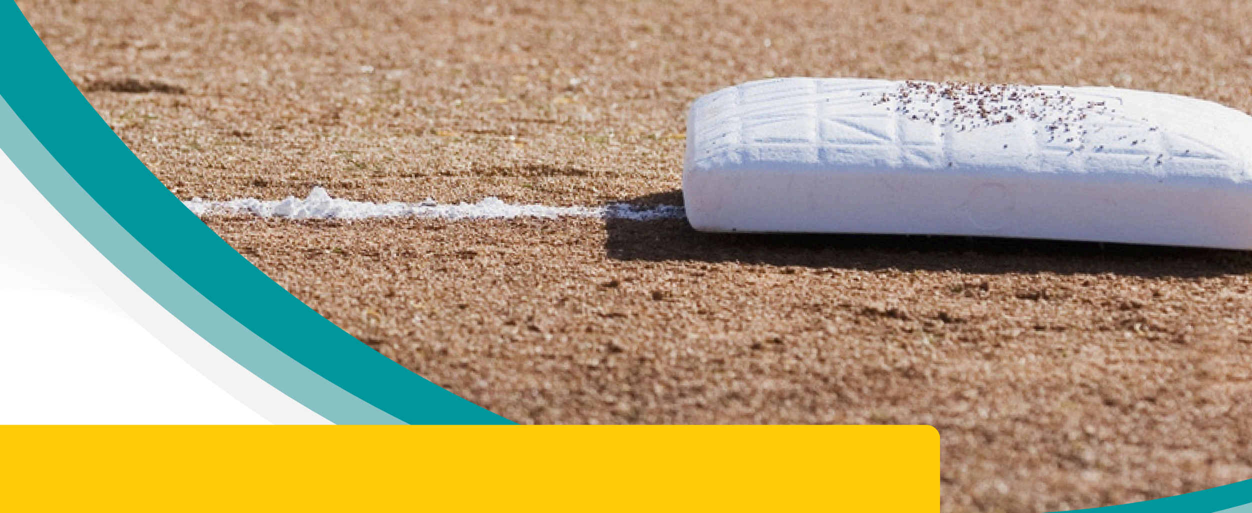
The New Playbook *For Better, Faster Contingent Workforce Sourcing*

If your organization has already implemented a self-managed enterprise contingent workforce program or managed service provider (MSP) model, or is still researching options to put stronger contingent workforce staffing systems in place, **there's a good chance some of the motivators behind the need for change include:**

- **Better control of costs**
- **Increased flexibility around temporary hiring**
- **Improved governance and visibility**
- **Centralized management of the vendor community**

There's also a good chance that your contingent staffing efforts may increasingly feel like they're shifting outside the strike zone. Whether you're struggling to find the right people, or frustrated by a reduction in speed or an increase in complexity, if sourcing talent today just feels more difficult, you're not alone. Unfortunately, that clunkiness in securing and tracking contingent labor often creates a situation that plays out like this:

The Damaging Default Play



- A busy hiring manager needs to quickly source a Project Manager for a mission-critical organizational project.
- The roster of candidates available through their approved vendor list is coming up short.
- The hiring manager turns to an informal network of unvetted low-volume vendors that may include independent contractors, boutique consultancies, and niche staffing firms to broaden the search.
- The hiring manager finds the specialized talent required for project success, but the workaround approach used to find the candidate raises significant concerns for the program office, including reduced visibility, rogue spend, inflated hourly rates, inconsistent compliance, and some very real audit risks.
- At the same time, this “back-room” sourcing makes it difficult to evaluate and document the vendor's performance.

While often thought of as a “just-this-time” solution that feels justified in isolation, repeated use of off-book vendors creates a long tail of unmanaged vendors.

If this scenario sounds familiar, you know the frustration of operating within or overseeing a system where solving problems quickly is sometimes best achieved by stepping outside approved processes. While often thought of as a “just-this-time” solution that feels justified in isolation, repeated use of off-book vendors creates a long tail of unmanaged vendors. Each additional hire through these unapproved vendors chips away at procurement governance, workforce compliance, financial visibility, and audit defensibility. This far-too-common situation represents one of the largest unmanaged operational risks inside modern enterprises today. Let’s take a look at why it’s happening.

Game Tape Review:

For most organizations that regularly rely on contingent staff 80% of candidate placements come from 20% of approved vendors

For program teams with limited time and resources, focusing your organization's efforts on that 20% of vendors that are responsible for 80% of your placements is absolutely the right approach to ensure these key vendors feel supported and sponsored. When program teams attempt to support that other 80% of vendors to the same degree, however, the time spent on tasks to support such a long tail of vendors can be frustrating for everyone involved. **The program team can get overwhelmed by the sheer volume of vendor calls, quarterly business reviews, contract negotiations, and vendor onboarding.** At the same time, the vendors doing most of the work can feel like they're not getting the attention they deserve.

The question to answer is "How can we create a situation where hiring managers can still draw from that 80% of vendors when they actually need the services of boutique and/or local vendors, without having to provide that long tail of infrequently used vendors with the same level of support as our top-tier vendors?" Answering this question correctly can create a win-win situation where hiring managers don't have to work outside the system when they need the services of a niche vendor, and the program office can be confident about the governance of these hires.

Borrowing a concept from the world of baseball, **the ideal situation is similar to how a team uses its bullpen for pitchers.**

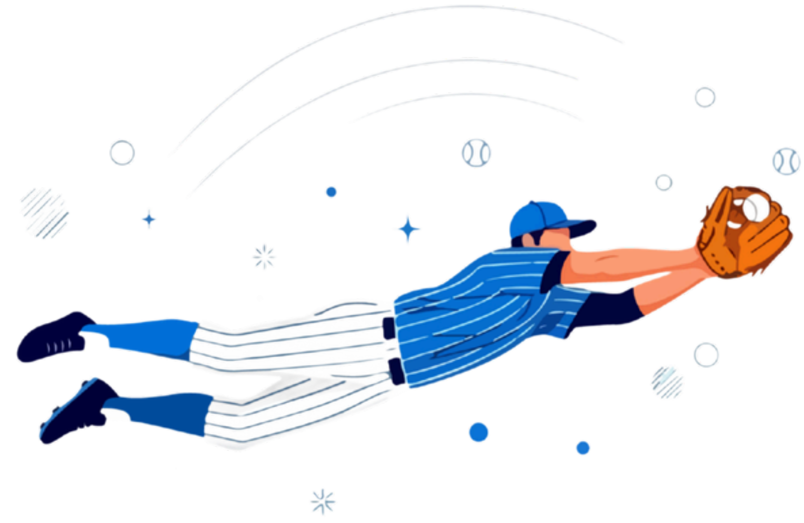
While the team's top pitcher plays, there is always a collection of seven or eight other pitchers waiting in the bullpen and available to play should and when their skills are required.

In applying this concept to your contingent staffing efforts, your frequently used, approved vendors (the 20%) are your starting pitchers, the remaining, less frequently used vendors (the 80%) wait in the bullpen, fully engaged and ready to be called in at a moment's notice when their specific talent is needed.

This bullpen-like approach is very similar to how a Supplier Marketplace model for contingent staffing efforts works.

From Rogue Recruiting to On-The-Books Roster Building:

Stacking Your Bench with a Supplier Marketplace Model



Today's war for talent offers organizations with the most robust and easy-to-curate candidate pool a massive advantage. Unfortunately, talent strategies that rely solely on fixed-vendor arrangements can make it tough to be agile and build the right team. The good news is that there is now a much better solution than looking the other way when hiring managers go rogue to source better candidates from non-preferred vendors.

The Supplier Marketplace Playbook

A Supplier Marketplace is an operating model that gives an enterprise program access to a much broader network of recruitment partners through a single managed relationship. **While it is added and appears as a single vendor in your organization's program, there is an entire bullpen behind it.** This sourcing network is built, governed, and managed by the Supplier Marketplace Enablement Team through a robust vendor application and intake process.

As contingent labor is required from niche or location-specific vendors, the Supplier Marketplace Enablement Team can quickly curate a tailored collection of the specific sourcing partners in the Marketplace with talent that fits the required skills, geography, and job category of the open position. But perhaps even more significant than this streamlined access to a much larger talent pool are the processes behind the Supplier Marketplace, which normalize commercial terms, centralize documentation, and consolidate payments for all contingent hires.

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Inside Baseball ... Supplier Marketplace Specific

How do vendors make the cut to become authorized Supplier Marketplace sourcing partners?

Rather than your organization having to manage additional vendors through the time-intensive RFP process, the Supplier Marketplace model invites all vendors to complete a standardized intake process. Once they have completed a profile, the Supplier Marketplace Enablement Team assumes duties associated with onboarding them as a sourcing partner, including creating the sourcing partner agreement and profile, confirming rate alignment, authorizing access to the Supplier Marketplace platform, and assigning them to the appropriate circles. Upon completion of those tasks, the new Supplier Marketplace sourcing partner can be receiving roles within just a few days.

How are the right sourcing partners for specific hires chosen from such a large pool of options?

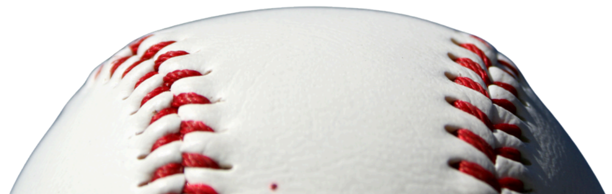
When a requisition is entered into the Supplier Marketplace, a list of sourcing partners is curated that has access to talent that reflects the unique attributes of the position, including skills, location, and job category demands. whose profiles include specializations that match the required capabilities.

How are the best candidates chosen from this larger pool?

Any candidate submission sent by a sourcing partner must first pass a centralized review conducted by the Supplier Marketplace Enablement Team to ensure they are a good fit for the role, rate, and presentation standards. This filtering process removes any unqualified candidates and creates a shortlist of only the most truly qualified candidates that is then sent to the hiring manager.

What is the process for controlling wage rates?

The Supplier Marketplace achieves rate parity with both the bill rate and the consultant pay rate. Bill rates in the Supplier Marketplace match preferred vendor bill rates, and pay rates to candidates are in the same ballpark as preferred vendors.



Inside Baseball ... Supplier Marketplace Specific

How does a Supplier Marketplace ensure compliance and alignment with program rules for so many more vendors?

To centralize the management of employment contracts, payroll, compliance, timesheets, billing, and the sourcing of partner commissions, the Supplier Marketplace takes on the responsibilities of a default EOR. This approach means sourcing partners recruit, they do not employ. The administration and tracking of costs, payments, and performance data flows through the Supplier Marketplace Enablement Team.

How much does it cost to implement and use a Supplier Marketplace solution?

As it is program-funded, there are no fees or additional costs to the organization adopting a Supplier Marketplace solution.

Can organizations operating without MSP or VMS infrastructure implement a Supplier Marketplace solution?

The Supplier Marketplace model works well with programs that are self-managed, as well as those that are MSP-managed As a Supplier Marketplace functions as a single operational control layer that can be implemented quickly at no additional cost, it's an excellent alternative for organizations without a VMS that are experiencing fragmented vendor activity.

Does a Supplier Marketplace Replace An Existing MSP or VMS?

Rather than replacing the MSP or VMS, a Supplier Marketplace complements it as a vendor-agnostic layer that sits alongside existing workflows. While the MSP or VMS still controls execution, the Supplier Marketplace appears as a single vendor within the existing workflow. It is one contract, one VMS line, and one invoice that, in turn, enables broader reach, better consistency, and improved governance across the entire vendor ecosystem.

The Supplier Marketplace Bullpen in Action

Once a Supplier Marketplace solution is implemented, hiring managers and recruitment teams no longer feel forced to bend the rules to find top-tier placements. Rather than relying on unapproved vendors for tough-to-fill positions, **the process shifts to look like this:**

- When a requisition is entered for preferred vendors to view, it also flows through the Supplier Marketplace.
- As the organization's preferred vendors begin sourcing candidates for the role, the requisition is also sent to a curated list of Supplier Marketplace sourcing partners with a high likelihood of candidates who match the required skills, job category, and work location for the open position.
- The Supplier Marketplace Enablement Team conducts an initial evaluation of all candidates found through Supplier Marketplace sourcing partners to ensure only strong options are presented to the organization.
- If the organization chooses to move forward with a candidate from one of its preferred vendors, it follows its own process to do so. If the organization chooses to move forward with a candidate from a Supplier Marketplace sourcing partner, the Supplier Marketplace Enablement Team takes on the responsibilities associated with contracts, payroll, compliance, timesheets, billing, and the sourcing of partner commissions
- To ensure the best pool of sourcing partners, the Supplier Marketplace Enablement Team continuously tracks the performance of those in the Supplier Marketplace. Top-performing sourcing partners earn progression, including increased visibility, priority access to high-value roles, and, in some cases, a data-backed pathway to preferred vendor status with the client. At the same time, any underperforming sourcing partners are transitioned out through a thoughtfully managed process.

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Reduced Rogue Spend and Increased Real-Time Intelligence

- A Supplier Marketplace eliminates the need for the frequently hidden foul-ball spend that flows through informal vendor relationships, sub-vendor placements, and statement-of-work workarounds. By routing all requisitions through a single, governed channel, organizations get real-time data on how much they're actually spending on contingent staffing and which sourcing partners are receiving payment. Over time, this directly improves forecasting accuracy and margin protection.

Less Time Managing Vendors

- Instead of having to dedicate time and effort to tasks such as procurement, contract negotiations, vendor onboarding, tracking sub-vendor activity, and reconciling invoices for hundreds of new vendors, Programme Office staff just need to manage a single contract with the Supplier Marketplace Enablement Team. The thousands of sourcing partners behind that contract are administered on their behalf.

Early-Stage Performance Data That Can Drive Future Vendor Selection

- Access to sourcing partners in the Supplier Marketplace allows organizations to "try before they buy" from a vast network of options. The evidence-based performance data generated and captured through the Supplier Marketplace reflects how talent is actually engaged and provides a strong foundation for future RFP cycles, quarterly reviews, and rationalization decisions.

Governance You Can Feel Good About

- Having a Supplier Marketplace shifts governance from a static list with invisible sub-vendor activity to a managed process. This shift drives governance by ensuring every placement flows through the EOR with consistent employment documentation, onboarding, and statutory compliance. A locked vendor list controls who participates, and the Supplier Marketplace controls how everyone enters, performs, and exits. Centralized documentation creates a strong audit trail, reducing regulatory exposure.

10 Signs It's Time for Your Organization to Call In Some Supplier Marketplace Relief

While a ratio of more third-party workers than tracked contingent staff is the most obvious signal that your contingent workforce program needs some help, several other clues point to the fact that your organization would benefit from a Supplier Marketplace:

Sign #1

Hiring managers reference having calls, coffee chats, and lunch meetings with vendors who aren't on your approved list.

Sign #2

You're seeing an increase in statement-of-work misclassifications and utilizations.

Sign #3

Workers sometimes appear in your VMS at invoice time that you didn't even know were on assignment.

Sign #4

When a hiring manager asks to bring in a new vendor, you tend to say no, even if they might be a good fit, because your intake process makes it too hard to say yes.

Sign #5

Your approved vendor list has not kept up with business demand.

Sign #6

You don't have a strong sense of which of your active placements were sourced by a primary vendor and which came through sub-vendors.

Sign #7

There isn't a clear process for handling requisitions that remain unfilled past the SLA.

Sign #8

Non-preferred supplier rates are coming in well above card rate.

Sign #9

In some cases, you struggle to trace the sourcing chain back to the originating vendor on a sub-vendor placement.

Sign #10

Hiring managers are talking to non-preferred suppliers about their needs.

If any of these signs sound familiar, you don't have a vendor program. You have a program design problem. When hiring managers are faced with demand for candidates that can't be met within your program, it's only natural for them to begin to search outside of it.

Implementing a Supplier Marketplace solution equips your hiring team with a proven system that lets them source the strongest candidates, without having to bend or break the rules.

Game-Changing Base Hits

As your organization researches Supplier Marketplace solutions, be aware of the subtle design details that can make a huge difference in implementation success. Questions to ask include:

1. Is the Supplier Marketplace agnostic?

The Supplier Marketplace should work alongside existing MSPs and VMS environments and easily integrate with Fieldglass, Beeline, and equivalent systems.

2. Does the Supplier Marketplace improve compliance and governance?

The goal is one contract, one invoice, one vendor line — regardless of network size.

3. Does the Supplier Marketplace have a system to enforce structured vendor intake?

Standardized onboarding should take days, not months, with a single agreement, followed by profile setup and immediate access to roles. As new vendors approach your organization with their sales pitch, the goal should be the ability to simply direct them to the Supplier Marketplace.

4. Does the Supplier Marketplace enforce rate governance at onboarding?

Rates should be aligned before sourcing partners ever touch a requisition, so rate integrity is enforced at the point of entry rather than discovered on the invoice.

5. Does the Supplier Marketplace allow for geographic scalability?

The ability to quickly activate new markets under the same governance prevents the need for rebuilds.

The Pre-Game Practice

It's wise for organizations interested in implementing a Supplier Marketplace model to start with a limited pilot to validate operational outcomes. Choose one specific geography or vendor category to focus on first for a time period between 60 and 90 days.

Metrics to track generated from the pilot period should include:

- **Reduction in vendor proliferation**
- **Increase in onboarding speed**
- **Improvements to compliance completion**
- **Invoice consolidation**
- **Changes in documentation quality**

Organizations that Raise has helped initiate Supplier Marketplace pilot projects have seen results that include:

One of North America's leading energy infrastructure companies generated over 200 candidate submissions from over 25 unique sourcing partners within nine months, a real-time demonstration of sourcing capacity that either wouldn't have existed or would have been executed outside the preferred network of vendors had the Supplier Marketplace not been in place.

A custom-built vendor network of 26 organizations

Clear performance signal and vendor promotion recommendation.

Ready To Take A Supplier Marketplace Test Swing?

Raise is ready to answer your Supplier Marketplace questions.

Should you wish to proceed with a pilot project, our Supplier Marketplace is primed and ready with over 6,000 pre-qualified sourcing partners and a talented Supplier Marketplace Operations team with a roster of successful implementations and best practices to share.

Schedule a Supplier Marketplace Discovery Call

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