

Boutique Direct Hire, Contract and Contract-to-Perm Staffing



Mikal C. Harden
Partner

CEOCFO: Ms. Harden, would you tell us the concept at Juno Search Partners?

Ms. Harden: We are a boutique staffing firm located in Center City Philadelphia. We specialize in direct hire, contract, and contract-to-perm in four main areas; Human Resources/Talent Acquisition, Administrative Support Staff, Accounting and Finance and IT. Regarding “concept”, we haven’t invented staffing, certainly – but we are extremely thorough and diligent. We truly know our clients and candidates – and if we don’t, we get to know them quickly.

CEOCFO: What do you understand fundamentally about the industry and about putting people together that perhaps others do not quite realize as well?

Ms. Harden: We use a hands-on approach. We meet with all of our clients and get a thorough understanding not just of the open position but the organization as a whole, the nuances of the culture and we get a true understanding of the leadership of the organization. From a recruiting standpoint we stay active in many different organizations and groups related to those areas in which we focus on and we stay entrenched in trends.

CEOCFO: What is the key to understanding a company as well as the culture and the goals?

Ms. Harden: We do a lot of due diligence and we get to know our clients pretty thoroughly and not just from what they tell us but research we do on our own. We look at their track record and what sort of tenure employees have had within their organization and what sort of growth and opportunities they have provided for their employees. We try to put a whole picture together.

CEOCFO: What do you look for in your applicants and how do you understand what is inside and not just on the resume?

Ms. Harden: I think that we as recruiters have to develop a gut for this type of thing. We are very diligent in getting a lot of our candidates from referrals and recommendations, really researching them and learning what sort of online presence they have and knowing about their accomplishments with previous employers. We do not have the post and pray mentality. What I mean by that is post a job and pray that the right candidate responds to your add; we are out and about meeting candidates in very creative ways.

CEOCFO: Are you surprised with what you find in the social media for many potential applicants?

Ms. Harden: Yes, we are surprised daily. We are advising everyone to be more cognizant of their footprint on the internet. You are being Googled and researched daily and I have seen it ruin more opportunities than create.

CEOCFO: What is the market like in Philly for the various segments?

Ms. Harden: We have been in business just over four years so when we started in the fall of 2010 we were finding fewer jobs and more applicants. The hard part was getting the client and the hard part was finding an open position that somebody wanted to outsource and the easier part was finding qualified applicants and that has changed a bit. Clearly the economy is improving and the market is getting tighter. We are inundated with positions right now and we find sourcing and recruiting to be the harder piece currently. I think it is a good sign for the economy but certainly, this can be quite a roller coaster.

CEOCFO: Do you find that in the administrative support segment that you are not able to get quality people?

Ms. Harden: One of our core areas from the start has been the high-level Executive Assistant to the C-Suite so it is one of the areas that we do the best and I think there are a great deal of talented Executive Assistants in Philadelphia. We do not have as much of a difficult time with that because that is one of the positions we are well known for in Philadelphia.

CEOCFO: *Is it strictly the higher level positions that you would be working on?*

Ms. Harden: We have developed a niche where we have placed a lot of their executive assistants for the top executives from the top companies in the region. We do our fair share of receptionist to mid level administrative assistants as well.

CEOCFO: *What is the competitive landscape for companies on the level of Juno?*

Ms. Harden: We have our fair share of competition and as with anything else, some fantastic and some that really give the entire industry a bad name. In the real estate market when things are good you get a lot of people getting their real estate license and selling homes and a large volume of people can get by and put food on their table and that is the same with recruiting. In a real good top market we see a lot of people coming out of the woodwork and becoming recruiters and opening their own firms. It is really only the strong that survive. It is a very competitive industry.

CEOCFO: *What has changed in your approach since you started the company? What have you learned along the way?*

Ms. Harden: We have learned that we have to be flexible. For example, when we started we were only doing HR and Admin and we were only doing direct hire. Within a year we had expanded significantly. There was such a demand from our clients that wanted temporary resources. We quickly added a contracting to our service offerings and that has been an explosive growth opportunity. In the next year it will account for over \$3 million annually of our revenue. Additionally we have been opportunistic and have had the opportunity to launch some new practice areas inside of Juno so within the last year and a half we launched an Accounting and Finance practice and most recently an IT practice. We have to be nimble with the market but opportunistic when we have an opportunity to bring superstars into our organization.

“We are focused on our clients, our candidates and our community.” - Mikal C. Harden

CEOCFO: *Your site indicates that giving back is important for the company. Where do you focus your efforts?*

Ms. Harden: Being philanthropic is something that has been important to us from the beginning. If you look on our website my quote listed by my name says “We make a living by what we get, we make a life by what we give.” That is the philosophy that we have at Juno. We are in the Philadelphia market and we give back to Philadelphia. We want to see Philadelphia grow and prosper and there are a lot of organizations that a lot of us are passionate about for different reasons. We believe that giving back and being philanthropic is one of our core values and we absolutely share our good fortune.

CEOCFO: *What is next for the company and what might be different down the road?*

Ms. Harden: That is hard to say. A lot of our growth is dictated by the economy. I look ahead and see a lot of good years for the economy and for Juno. I think that we will continue to grow. We have been in early discussions for opening an office in another region potentially. Certainly our Philadelphia office will continue to grow. We are looking forward to many exciting things.

CEOCFO: *When people read about Juno what should they remember most?*

Ms. Harden: We are focused on our clients, our candidates and our community. We are not a make-a-fee and see-you-later type of firm. We are here in Philadelphia and we are going to be here for the long haul. We are more focused on relationships and giving back to our community, than the almighty dollar. We want to make a difference – a difference in our lives, our employees lives, with clients, candidates, and our community.

For more information visit: www.junosearchpartners.com

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