



# Navigating the staffing supply chain

Overcoming operational  
challenges in 2024

**indeed flex**



With headlines about Generative AI and ongoing supply chain disruptions, “digitisation” is the hottest buzzword in operations this year. 37% of Operations Managers say their companies have changed their operating model in last 12 months<sup>1</sup>, and most see tech as the only viable path to sustainable operational excellence.

But the most urgent use of technology is not innovative new processes - it’s getting the fundamentals right. Workforce shortages and inefficient staffing are constant concerns for enterprise operations, with 73% of employers currently struggling to recruit talent as fast as they would like - and 71% saying it’s difficult to find the right quality talent.<sup>2</sup>

**This eBook explores how the right workforce technology can help them overcome these problems.**

**41%**

of Operations Managers say compliance with labour practice regulations will require new technology<sup>3</sup>

## Staffing shortages pose serious operational risks

Workforce shortages are still a major problem for US and UK businesses. A third of UK businesses are currently understaffed at least once per week<sup>4</sup>, while 70% of American companies say they are having trouble filling roles.<sup>5</sup>

These shortages create multiple problems for Operations Managers which many companies mitigate through an increased reliance on temporary workers. In fact, 65% of global businesses plan to use more temporary workers in the next two years.<sup>6</sup> But this creates its own challenges...

[1](https://www.pwc.com/us/en/services/consulting/business-transformation/digital-supply-chain-survey.html) [2](https://www.pwc.com/us/en/services/consulting/business-transformation/digital-supply-chain-survey.html) Flex Survey [3](https://www.pwc.com/us/en/services/consulting/business-transformation/digital-supply-chain-survey.html) [4](https://www.mirror.co.uk/money/one-three-businesses-short-staffed-32572031) [5](https://www.economist.com/business/2024/05/08/is-america-incs-war-for-talent-over) [6](https://www2.staffingindustry.com/eng/Editorial/Daily-News/65-of-companies-say-they-plan-to-increase-use-of-contingent-workers-66456)

# Operations Managers lack agency oversight

Companies' reliance on temp agencies creates multiple vulnerabilities:



## Poor Visibility

Operations Managers often don't know how their agencies source temps, what processes are involved, or how quality assurance is undertaken. 60% of companies cannot even verify that their temps have gone through a background check<sup>7</sup>, and 63% of Operations leaders say lack of visibility into their contingent workforce is a top challenge.<sup>8</sup> This creates serious regulatory problems, with 51% of Operations Managers believing new tech is required to ensure compliance.<sup>9</sup>



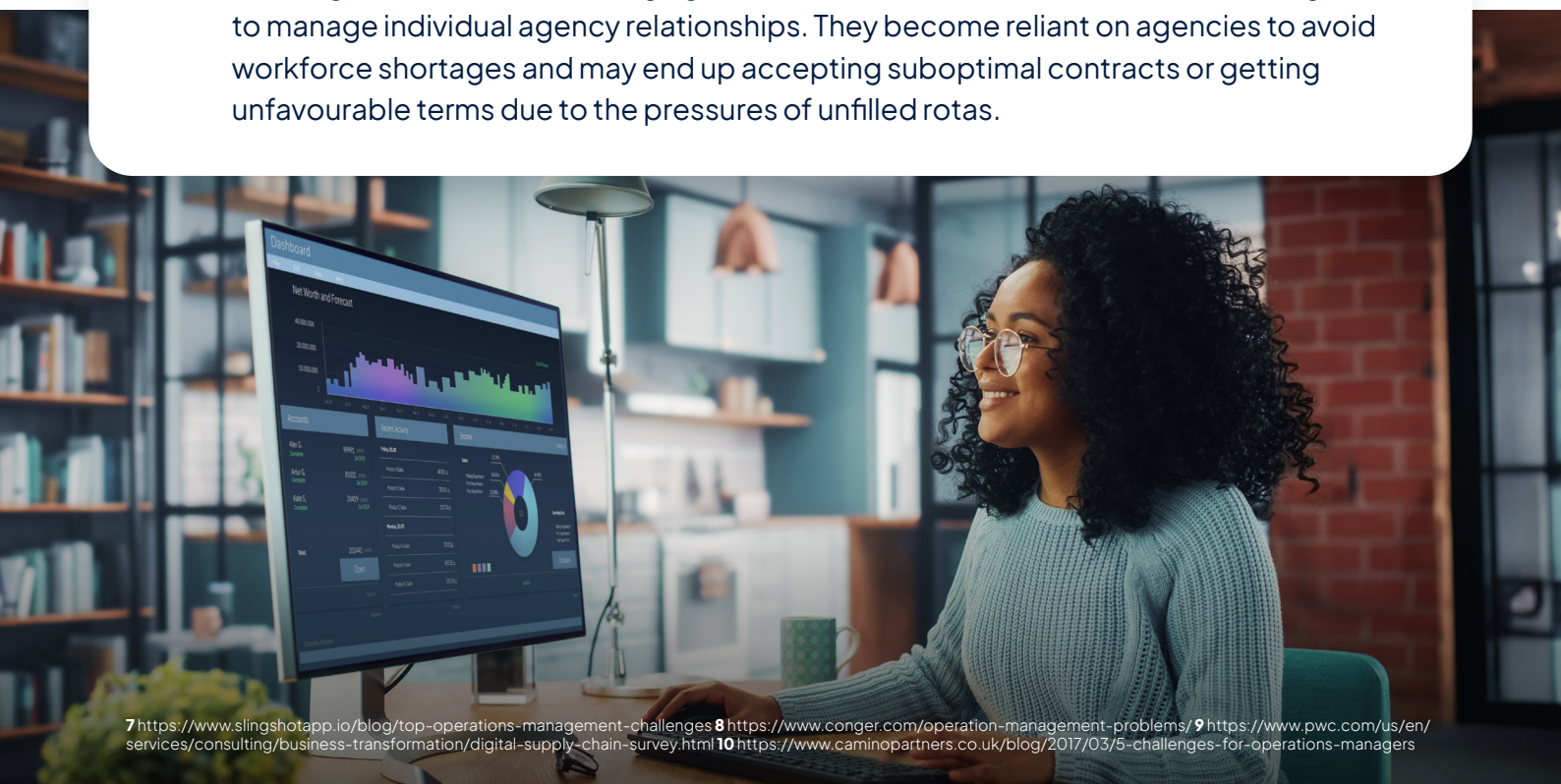
## Spiralling Costs

Poor visibility makes it difficult to manage the temporary workforce - and ultimately leads to poor workforce utilisation and spiralling costs. In fact, 59% of Operations Managers cite controlling operational costs at their biggest challenge.<sup>10</sup>



## Lack of Control

Working with numerous staffing agencies makes it difficult for Operations Managers to manage individual agency relationships. They become reliant on agencies to avoid workforce shortages and may end up accepting suboptimal contracts or getting unfavourable terms due to the pressures of unfilled rotas.



<sup>7</sup> <https://www.slingshotapp.io/blog/top-operations-management-challenges> <sup>8</sup> <https://www.conger.com/operation-management-problems/> <sup>9</sup> <https://www.pwc.com/us/en/services/consulting/business-transformation/digital-supply-chain-survey.html> <sup>10</sup> <https://www.caminopartners.co.uk/blog/2017/03/5-challenges-for-operations-managers>



## Operations Managers typically opt for one of the following solutions:

- **Rely on a smaller group of agencies**, which increases visibility but creates greater vulnerability to sudden cost increases or temp shortages.
- **Spread the risk across a larger network of agencies**, but accept that this likely produces data silos, visibility issues, and weaker relationships with individual suppliers.

Neither approach is optimal, and both suffer from the same limitation: **poor workforce technology.**



# Poor technology limits operational excellence

Many of the challenges Operations Managers face are about processes. Companies either lack sophisticated workforce technology, or struggle with multiple systems that don't interoperate. A recent Indeed Flex survey found:

- **36%** of businesses blame “ineffective hiring and onboarding process” for poor retention rates
- **84%** find it difficult to track workforce performance
- **52%** say their biggest challenge is a lack of visibility into costs
- **48%** say their biggest challenge is visibility into individual worker performance

As a result, Operations Managers face:



## Scalability restrictions

As companies grow, managing a larger workforce becomes a bigger and bigger point of friction. They use a mixture of digital solutions, manual spreadsheets and paper - which simply does not scale. Ultimately, 75% of Operations leaders say their current workforce management systems won't meet their future needs.<sup>11</sup>



## Lack of data

Operations managers require robust data to optimise workforce utilisation. But most rely on patchy, often inaccurate information - creating huge inefficiencies. They know that matching staffing levels to demand leads to a 5.7% improvement in profitability<sup>12</sup>, but the average UK business is either 30% over-staffed or 16% under-staffed at any point in time.<sup>13</sup>



## Workforce friction

Operational excellence requires a cohesive workforce. But manually managing multiple staffing agencies - often via Excel or paper spreadsheets - makes it impossible for leaders to create a truly “blended” workforce. 89% of leaders struggle to integrate their contingent workforce, with 26% saying they can't get the same workers consistently.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.conger.com/operation-management-problems/> <sup>12</sup> <https://www.retailsensing.com/people-counting/retail-staff-scheduling/> <sup>13</sup> <https://retail-focus.co.uk/under-overstaffing-a-financial-drain-for-uk-businesses-managing-deskless-workers/> <sup>14</sup> Flex Survey

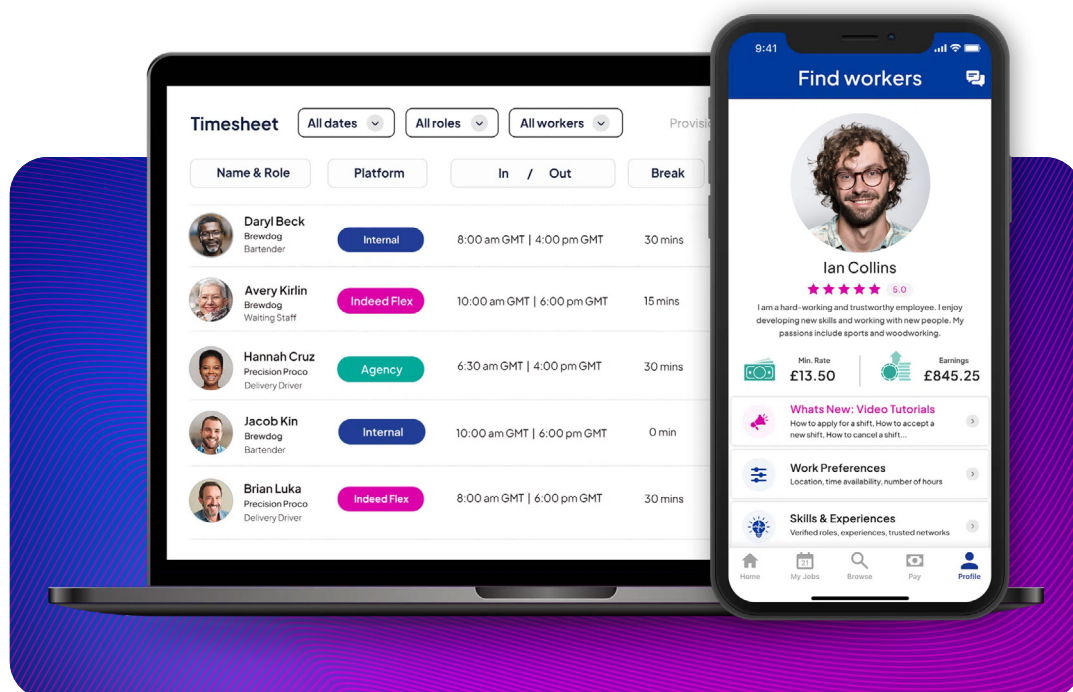


# Three ways leading Operations Managers solve these problems with Flex Plus

## 1. Centralise agency management

The fastest, simplest and most effective way to resolve agency visibility issues is to unify all agency data in a single platform. This enables you to compare contract language and labour procurement practices across all sites - ensuring consistency of both legal terms and costs.

**Flex Plus takes this a step further by allowing you to bring all workers into the same platform.** You can analyse and manage both temp agency workers and your full-time employees via the same platform - creating a truly “blended” workforce.



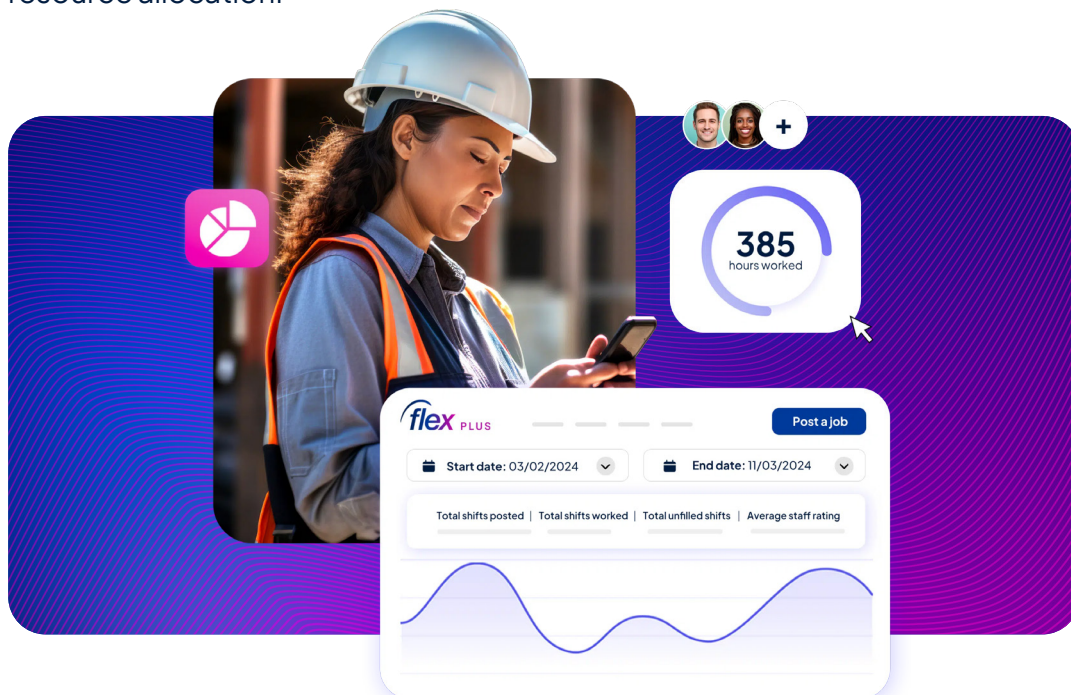
## 2. Track performance data

Employee analytics gives you insight into the quality and reliability of temp workers - regardless of the agency they come from. This allows you to quickly locate inefficiencies and ensure you only source workers that meet your requirements and deliver the operational excellence you expect.

**Flex Plus provides comprehensive workforce and fulfilment insights.**

The platform offers an intuitive dashboard to highlight trends, identify areas for improvement, and track performance with robust real-time data.

This empowers Operations Managers to make data-driven decisions, gain control over their agency relationships and maximise the efficiency of resource allocation.



## 3. Regulatory risk

The problem with most workforce management platforms is they are too rigid. The whole point of this technology is to enable flexible, dynamic staffing that ensures operational excellence - yet the solutions rarely fit your specific organisation's operating model.

**Flex Plus is fully customisable and designed to match your specific needs.** You choose whether you want total autonomy through our vendor management system or a full-scale MSP solution. Our team works with you to build an approach that solves your operational challenges - as well as scaling alongside you.



# Take action on these vital challenges in contingent workforce management today

Whether you're in HR, talent acquisition, or overseeing contingent workforce operations, your role will be made easier and more effective by an integrated solution - and Indeed Flex Plus has exactly what you need.



**Email us**

[enquires@indeedflex.com](mailto:enquires@indeedflex.com)



**Call us**

0203 880 6955



**indeed flex**

[enquires@indeedflex.com](mailto:enquires@indeedflex.com) | [indeedflex.co.uk](https://indeedflex.co.uk)



Indeed Flex, Ground Floor, 20 Farringdon Road, London, EC1M 3HE