

# WHATEVER!!!!

<http://crazymotts.blogspot.in/>

**FLEXI-STAFFING IN THE UNITED STATES:**

**FAKE RESUMES FOR SURVIVAL**



Motts

## **Hello World,**

Here's what I have been attempting to comprehend for over a year....I did take time off to share other opinions of mine...while I pondered over this topic in the back of my mind...I haven't figured it out completely but I guess it is time to put it out there and hope, in the process, I would figure out the rest.

This piece of writing specifically concentrates on my observations, inferences, decisions and choices that I made during the short period of time I spent job-searching in the United States. It is my brief stint with the flexi-staffing fraternity in the United States that I am trying to describe, explore and possibly bring out the harsh realities that I think would keep you informed.....I am going to be as objective as possible and that would mean that we will be looking at the flexi-staffing funny games from a Structure-Mechanics-WorkFlow standpoint...we would however make an attempt to interpret the subliminal layers of the vicious system that I think is consuming mankind at a rapid rate globally. I had been through a system that calls for, advocates, supplies and implements fake resumes, with falsified information regarding one's educational and professional qualifications and experience for the sake of obtaining employment. The cruelty of the system lies in the fact that the candidates are forced to compromise their integrity for the financial benefit and the short-cut to the paper-work that would help them stay in the United States.....and we might as well begin with the story....

### **Let's Get There First**

Now that we have begun, we must identify our position and point of view in the system so as to stay informed on what we would look at specifically. This topic we have in front of us is very vast and I do not know or understand it completely to give you the wholesome picture. Getting to the specifics, we would keep our observations to the IT-Industry in the United States that is catering to multiple industries in so many ways. All the large corporations do not carry out all their operations as an in-house effort and

instead outsource them to various contractors who would do the work for them. From the IT standpoint, the companies would hire software service providers who would run the IT operations for them. These companies (Contractors) in turn would outsource part(s) of their work to smaller software firms (Sub-Contractors). These contracting and sub-contracting companies would have a skeleton work-force (permanent employees) and a floating work-force (temporary employees/consultants) who together would coordinate efforts to carry out the work outsourced by the Big Guy. We would be exploring into how these contractors and sub-contractors end up getting their “Floating Work Force,” more precisely, the modus operandi of “Consultancies” in the flexi-staffing services. Are you ready? Let’s Rock n Roll!!!

### Game’s Got Structure

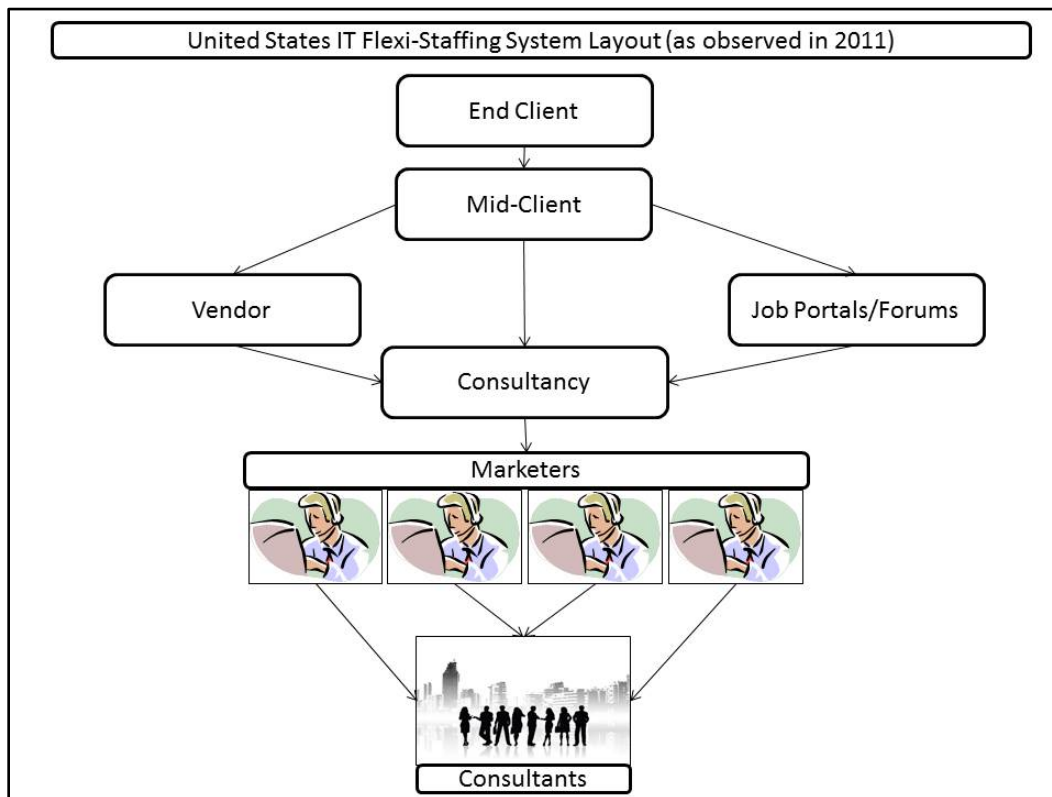


Figure 1

We begin with some Flexi-Staffing jargon, if I may call it so. The Big Corporation that outsources its IT/Operations would be the End-Client, the Contracting/Sub-Contracting companies would be the Mid-Clients, and the HR/Recruitment Partners of the Mid Clients would be the Consultancies who have the “Consultants” on payroll. Throw in a “Vendor”....wonder what they are? They are recruitment agencies that receive the position requirements and forward them to their partner-consultancies....kind of Consultancy of Consultancies....confused? Well, I am... ;)

Now going from the bottom up, referring to Figure 1 as given above, the consultants would be the “Please-get-Me-A-Job” desperate jobseekers who are ready to go as flexi-staff since their attempts to find full-time employment hasn’t been successful yet. I was one among them when I got into the system. The Marketers would be the recruitment professionals responsible for gathering position requirements from Mid-Clients, Vendors and Job Portals and forward them to the eager Consultants. The Consultancies would call themselves as a “.....fast growing provider of IT, ERP and Project Management solutions to leading clients in the commercial and government sectors...” but all they would do is provide flexi-staff to IT clients in ways that are not very obviously known to everyone around. I guess we have gone over the system structure from either direction. It is time we get to the Physics of the system....

## **The Game Begins**

The candidates who are desperate for a H1B Visa submit their resumes to the Consultancies and their recruiters respond with a call/email. The so-called interview goes on for about 15 minutes and the only thing that gets assessed is confidence in speech and openness to work in different domains. Little do the candidates know about the nightmares they are about to face. Finally an offer letter is sent to them through email.

I present to you some samples:

- Payrate Document
- Offer Letter
- Proof of Employment (for OPT Card and related processing)

The Payrate Document pretty much says how this game is played. The mid-client would charge the end-client a certain amount per hour for the consultant hired. Since he creates the opportunity for this consultant position, he would take a certain percentage of the hourly rate and would give the rest to the consultancy or the vendor. Now if it was the vendor that gave the requirement to the consultancy, he would take his share of the loot and give the rest to the consultancy. The consultancy would have an agreement with the consultant as described in the Payrate document and would pay the consultant accordingly. Now since many players are involved in this game, the financial component gets bigger. To accommodate the financial component, the mid-client would claim that he would require a 8 years experienced candidate for a temporary position and would require \$120 per hour as the salary for the 8 years experienced candidate. The end-client has very little or no say in this because he just wants the work done and is willing to pay for it as per the agreement. Now the end-client however would sometimes demand to interview and assess the consultant prior to finalizing the temporary employment. So the mid client would take \$40 from the \$120 and give the remainder \$80 to the vendor. The vendor would have an agreement with his partner consultancies as to how much per hour will be his share. It is usually around \$30. So he would take his share and give the remaining \$50 to the consultancy. Let's say the consultant is a new guy and is within first 6 months of his employment with the consultancy. In that case as per the Payrate document given above, the consultant would get \$25 per hour for the work he/she would execute at the mid-client's or the end-client's site during the course

of the project. I have used \$120 as an example figure and the pay rate may vary from position to position. The Figure.2 given below would explain this schematically:

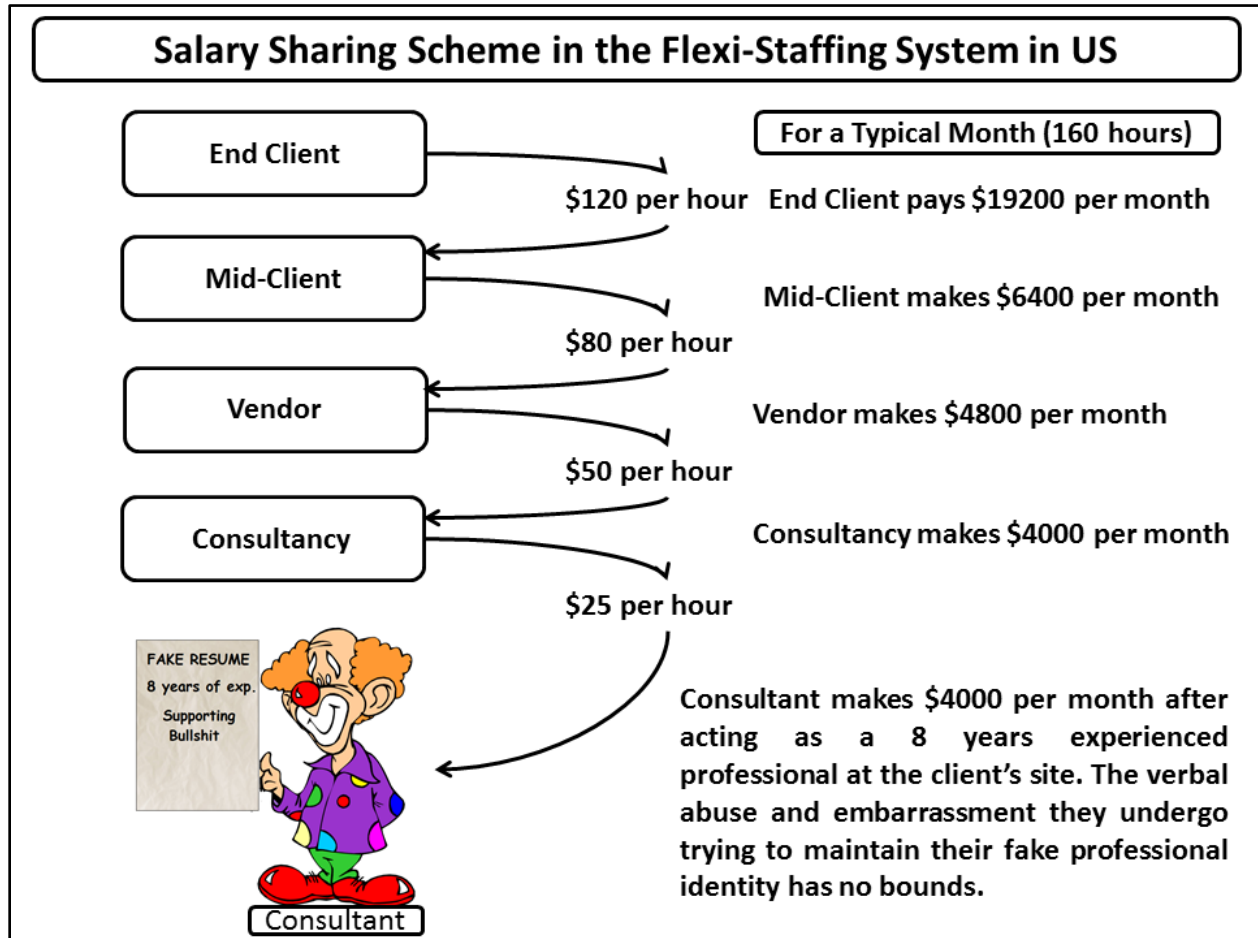


Figure 2

Now the twist in the screenplay is that this consultant will not be an actual 8 years experienced candidate. He/she would be a fresher just out of college with a master's degree. Since the mid-client needs an 8-years experienced candidate, the requirement would be drafted accordingly and the forwarded down the line as shown in Figure.1. The consultancy would supply the consultant with fake resumes that would match the job/position requirement and ask him/her to update it with necessary contact information. We will get there as we progress. We still have to familiarize with the recruitment and induction of flexi-staff employees into the consultancies.

The candidates are asked to relocate to where the Consultancy is. Those who live nearby commute as usual but Out-of-Towners are offered accommodation by the Consultancy. It usually is a set of apartments shared by the Out-of-Towners. Now the picture gets slightly dark. A typical double bedroom apartment would have around 7 to 10 guys sharing the space. Some consultancies offer mattresses too. So each room would have 2 or 3 inmates. There is a hierarchy in such apartments. The Living-Room dwellers are newbies and they are yet to be inducted into the brotherhood. The Inmates of the Master Bedroom are the Big-Daddies of the Brotherhood, who are the supposed to lead the brotherhood and therefore get to lay the ground rules for the pack to follow. The Inmates of the Guest Bedroom are the Dukes who are eagerly waiting to become the future Big Daddies.

The first day of reporting is always the "First-Day-to-New School" experience....New faces, new atmosphere and new territories. The candidates are briefed on how the flexi-staffing happens and a contract is given to all of them to sign. Trust me that contract is nothing more than a big joke. It definitely had a lot of legal jargon that went above my head at MACH 2 but when I was given one, I took a day to read through it, signed it and gave it to the manager. I was not given a copy of the signed contract. The contract signing formality is a scare tactic employed by the consultancy to send the message across to the candidate that in case someone wants out; he/she will be in deep trouble because of this contract. So the first thing that consultancies usually do is to instill a sense of insecurity in the minds of the new recruits that would motivate the employees to be willing to make any compromise, whatsoever, for the sake of survival and in the process become totally dependent on the consultancy. After all, it is the dire need for a piece of paper called H1B Visa that makes these individuals make all the compromises. I had been there and I decided to make those compromises for the same reasons. I just could not handle that truth within me and I never went on any project as a consultant.

## **Training to Lie**

The consultancy I was with specialized in the Business Analyst/Quality Analyst/Systems Analyst positions in the IT industry. So the training I went through was specific to these positions.

The training begins with the initial brainwashing of the new recruits that aims at cementing the opinion of faking the experience for financial benefit is nothing wrong and in fact it is the fastest way to grow professionally. Statements like “...why begin from level zero when you can begin from level 5 or 6?” and “...You follow my instructions...I will make sure you get your H1B and Green Card on time...Don't worry....I am there....” are continuously repeated in front of the newly recruited consultants. The trainer and manager always try to get the answer “Yes” out of the consultants, rewarding them with the promise of better future in the United States. Most consultants fail to realize that such talks are the practical application of good old Socratic Method of Persuasion.....kind of Modern Day Dogma with the spiritual part being replaced by professional/survival needs.

The technical/core knowledge of the Business Analyst/Quality Analyst positions are condensed and rammed into the brains of the consultants within a time span of about 4 weeks. The primary objective is to enable the consultant defend his/her resume during the telephonic and face-to-face interviews. A handful of software related to software testing such as Load-Runner, QTP are introduced to the consultants so that they are familiarized with the software functionalities and interfaces that would help them survive the tough situations at the workplace and most importantly help them answer the questions correctly during the interviews. The consultancy's primary aim would be to enable the consultant clear the interviews and secure a placement in any project. What the consultant wishes to do is absolutely immaterial because the consultant is a liability to the consultancy until placed in a project. Once the consultant secures a placement, he/she becomes a source of revenue and therefore a completely different format of respect and camaraderie is offered to them from then on. It has to be



noted that the batch of consultants getting trained on software development, testing and maintenance would be from a diverse set of educational backgrounds ranging from electrical engineering to marketing management. They make the compromise because they have been convinced by the consultancy to be “Open to options” so that they will do their best to get the consultants well settled in the United States. One can only imagine how a brain trained for years in one field gets all the new technology information and stacks it for a make-believe act of pretense that would help portray the consultant as a professional with years of experience in the IT industry.

During the training period, the newly recruited consultants are offered a set of fake resumes related to Business Analyst/Quality Analyst/Systems Analyst and are asked to go through them to get a “feel” of how their resumes are going to be while they are being marketed to mid-clients and end-clients as experienced professionals. The consultants are given a sample position and experience domain and are asked to prepare a sample fake resume that would meet the requirement. A mock interview/resume analysis is done as a class so that the entire batch gets to know what to do and what not to do while fabricating resumes for requirements. This training goes to the nuts and bolts of resume writing where the specifics are discussed elaborately such as the date/time lines of each project that is included in the resume. Depending on the level of intimacy and moral surrender of the consultant to the management, a specific set of resumes are forwarded to each consultant individually. The game layer in any consultancy is always a zero sum game where the consultants are made to believe that one’s gain will be another’s loss and every day they stay with the consultancy without securing a placement in a project, they are losing money. So the rat race begins right there. Consultants go to great lengths, trying to get a good impression in the minds of the consultancy’s senior personnel so that they get a “Good Set of Fake Resumes” that others don’t get. The want for a set of descriptions of interesting projects that may lure the vendor/mid-client to call for an interview grows exponentially at this stage of the training. There is a paradigm shift we need to note here. From accepting to defend fake resumes in the beginning, the

consultants go to the far extreme of scrambling for good-looking fake resumes. The confidentiality that goes along with “Resume Preparation” would easily pass the confidentiality that the United States Government would implement for the sake of its National Security measures. The consultancy briefs each consultant separately and informs all of them individually that they are special than the rest of the lot and that they just need to follow management’s instructions and everything will fall in place. Again this Good Cop-Bad Cop routine is to ensure that the consultants have generated a state of fear believing the zero-sum-game that when others get into a project, they would be just there...losing everything. Therefore each consultant in his/her own way would make genuine efforts to get the confidence of the senior personnel of the consultancy and prepare hard to make...well FAKE RESUMES. The following are samples of fake resumes (that I came across during my time with the flexi-staffing system) for the positions of Business Analyst/Quality Analyst/Systems Analyst in various domains:

Business Analyst with Experience of 5 years (Telecom/Finance/Healthcare)

Business Analyst with Experience of 5 years (Airlines/Telecom/Hospitality)

Business Analyst with Experience of 5 years (E-Commerce/Finance)

Business Analyst with Experience of 5 years (Insurance: Property/Casualty)

Business Analyst with Experience of 5 years (Finance/Banking/Airlines)

Business Analyst with Experience of 5 years (Healthcare: Medicaid/Medicare/Airlines)

Business Analyst with Experience of 5 years (Healthcare: Medicaid/Medicare/Commercial)

Quality Analyst with Experience of 5 years (QTP/Finance/Banking)

Quality Analyst with Experience of 5 years (VB Scripting/Mobile Handset testing/Telecom)

Quality Analyst with Experience of 5 years (Performance Testing/Finance/Banking)

Senior Quality Analyst with Experience of 7 years (QTP/Automation/Finance)

Systems Analyst with Experience of 6 years (healthcare/Claims Management/Technical Instruction)

The resumes shown above are just samples. You can imagine a position and there will be at least 10 suitable resumes for that imaginary position. These resumes have different grades of quality too!!! The ones given above are supposed to be “Vanilla Resumes” which means that these are the most exploited and most common, which in turn means that these would not attract as many calls as the other “Killer Resumes” that are available to a select clan of consultants namely the Brotherhood of Ass-Kissers. Those “Killer Resumes” apparently get so much attention of the recruiters that consultants who got and worked with those “Killer Resumes” got fantastic projects and amazing work opportunities. Vanilla or Killer, it really doesn’t matter because all of those resumes are absolutely unoriginal with falsified information of all kinds. Except for the consultant’s contact information, everything on these resumes is false and quite frankly way above my head. These resumes have a lot of IT-related technical information that I have never heard or read about anywhere. The consultants therefore get trained on how to create killer resumes that can attract calls from recruiters. Very few of the consultants end up working their domain or any domain that they have even heard of.

## **Post Training Posing**

After the training, the consultants are put in “Marketing” which means that from then on they would be receiving various requirements from the Consultancy’s marketers. It is common for consultancies to have a dedicated marketing team that would do the leg work of searching through job portals and network with vendors/clients to get the requirements that can be filled up by the consultants in

“marketing.” Some consultancies even have dedicated marketing teams operating from overseas. That marketing team would work night shifts to cater to the consultants in the United States.

This is how it happens. The individuals running the consultancy would compile all the email id’s of the newly brain-washed consultants and forward them to the marketing team. The marketers would start sending bulk emails to all the consultants with requirements as they start getting them. They would then call the consultants one by one and ask them to send a suitable resume. Anything to be added or edited is discussed over phone. Also the “Tao of fooling US Clients” with respect to what to say during interviews is imparted for free over those conversations. Sometimes a known vendor would ask for a very specific resume with mentions of specific terms. The marketer would immediately call the consultant and ask him/her to send such a resume. Once the consultant sends the resume, the marketer forwards it to the vendor and receives acknowledgement. The marketer then calls the consultant and discloses the key information regarding the areas of assessment during the telephone interview for the specific position.

There is ample room for fun in this phase. Sometimes what happens is that the vendors and marketers, over time successfully place a whole bunch of consultants by pushing their fake resumes and eventually grow to be great friends or professional colleagues. The vendor would know that for a certain set of requirements, this marketer friend of his/her would definitely provide quality resumes and confident consultants who can beat Broadway Veterans in acting and dialogue delivery. The same way the marketers would know what areas the respective vendors specialize in. So it is a colluded cult of resume push fanatics. In the happy moments, sometimes the marketers prepare a resume on their own using a consultant’s contact information and submit it for consideration to a vendor. The consultant is then informed over phone that such a resume has been forwarded. This happened with me and it was a hilarious experience. I had no idea about what the position was and what resume was sent. Now in

times like these the consultant would have like a few hours to prepare for telephone interview on something someone thought would be a perfect match for the consultant's professional growth. ;)

## **The Call Handling Conspiracies**

Now once the resumes get submitted, the mobiles start ringing. Consultants would sit the whole day at the consultancy, staring at the monitor and mobile phones, hoping to receive calls for the submissions made. Resumes for various positions and domains would get submitted. How would the consultant know which resume to speak about whenever someone calls? This is where organized planning is taught to the consultants. The consultants make Excel Resume Trackers that would be updated as soon as a resume is submitted. The fields of importance for a resume tracker are Position, Location, Client's Name, Marketer, Years of experience (as per requirement/resume) and finally a link to the particular resume that was submitted against that requirement. When the consultant gets a call, he/she needs to get the position's details from the caller before getting into the conversation, click open the corresponding resume and then proceed with the conversation. This is required because after about 10 days in marketing, the consultant would not remember what resume was submitted against what requirement. Now, once the resume is open in front of the consultant, it becomes easy for him/her to refer to it and deliver consistent replies with respect to work experience as mentioned in the resume. One has to be physically present to enjoy the humor of a consultant opening a wrong version of a resume midway through the interview and delivering contradictory answers sending signals of suspicions to the recruiter who's calling. I have had many opportunities to witness similar incidents where the caller would ask something and the consultant would have never heard of it before. The rest of us would google it, write it on paper and flash it to the consultant and he/she would then pick up from there. We were experiencing our own Consultancy version of Les Miserables and still managed to laugh it out hard and loud.

Sometimes the vendors would know very well about this system and would begin the telephone interview with “Can you google things out and survive in this job? I will tell you what the American mid-client and end-client would ask. Just prepare the answers and deliver with confidence. I will take care of the rest...” The consultant then has to convince the vendor that he/she is smart enough to act and would somehow manage to survive. If the vendor is convinced about the consultant’s acting capabilities, he/she would forward it to the mid/end-clients.

The real deal about telephone interviews is when substitute speakers are engaged. Sometimes when the consultant manages to convince the vendor and fool the mid-client with the fake resume submitted, the end-client interview gets scheduled. The consultant’s unlucky if it is a face-to-face interview because impersonation is impossible. But in the case of end-client interviews scheduled to be carried out over telephone, it’s a whole different ball game. As an act of courtesy, the consultants who managed to get placements in projects would offer to help the next batch by taking telephonic interviews on their behalf, posing as the consultants for whom the interviews are scheduled. The timings are confirmed over emails. The senior personnel of the consultancy would choose the experienced consultant to attend the call as scheduled. Again the consultant needs to be part of the Brotherhood of Ass-Kissers to be offered this coveted privilege of letting some random guy talk as the consultant. Once the timings are frozen, the “Call-Taker” is forwarded with a copy of the fake resume submitted and the consultant is asked to speak to the “Call-Taker” to discuss about the position and the interview. Exactly 15 minutes before the interview’s scheduled time, the consultant enables call-divert in his/her mobile and marks the Call-Taker’s mobile number. So when the end-client (mostly an American in charge of the project) calls, he or she would not know that they would be talking to someone else who is posing as the consultant as mentioned in the faked out resume that has been submitted. If the Call-Taker does the magic, then everyone celebrates. I have tried so many times to identify what they can possibly celebrate about this and I never found anything.

## **Living off People's Misery**

Now that we have observed the dark side of flexi-staffing in the United States of America, especially in the IT industry, it is time we make an attempt to understand the underlying implications of the same. These consultancies, for the most part, are operating on the basis of greed and are misusing the fire and enthusiasm of individuals who travel all the way to America with the hopes of living their share of the American dream. Young men and women say yes to all the compromising conditions laid out by the consultancies only because they are ready to do everything to survive, get a job, earn some money and live happily. Now just because the consultancies have the means to obtain temporary employment, they get to handle people as their slaves. The consultants have no other choice but to lie and defend their fake resumes so they can have a job and eventually survive. Now defending an 8 years resume is one thing but working according to the experience submitted is a whole different thing. Consultants go through verbal abuse and mockery on a daily basis just because they do not know the work they are doing. They have to learn as they work and perform in the job. Most importantly, after getting placed in a project, the consultant has to memorize his/her fake resume so they don't give contradicting replies to their colleagues while engaging in friendly conversations. Consultancies would instruct the consultants not to make friends with fellow workers soon after joining since the risk of getting identified as a faker is high and that would jeopardize the employment. There had been occasions when the bosses had asked the consultant about why their working is very slow and with silly mistakes while they have been working the same domain for over 8 years. There have been cases when the client companies find out about the fake resumes and fire the consultant. The consultancies in those cases would only say that it is not an issue since they can get the consultant another better project. The consultant compromises his/her integrity, prepares to lie and fake professional experience, struggles on the job with no help whatsoever, works like a dog and bears all the embarrassment he/she is showered with at the

workplace.....only to survive in the United States...and the consultancies, vendors and mid-clients just eat away the bulk of the money that they earn at the cost of the consultant.

There are cases where everyone including the end-client knows that the resume submitted is fake and still things roll this way in the United States. The way I understand it, those bosses have a feeling that if some consultant is smart enough to defend a fake resume, then he/she is fit enough to work with them. We cannot exclude the possibilities of scenarios where the actual clients have no idea about the fake resume and the inexperienced yet enthusiastic consultant. Companies don't have to pay benefits (health insurance/pension) when they hire temporary/contract employees since the consultancies would be the employers of those consultants. Companies like such employees because they can hire just when they need and downsize easily when the demand falls. This corporate mentality of manipulating manpower cost for profits has given birth to a great industry in the United States that has been vandalized over time and its current state is beneficial to the hiring companies and consultancies but not to the workers/employees. The industry is so widely spread that each consultancy would have multiple companies registered as partner firms or stand-alone companies in order to compensate for the H1B limit laid out by the United States government. Consultancies exploiting the regulations laid out by the United States government and the increasing state of unemployment does affect the workers adversely in certain cases. The workers are exploited and used up for financial benefit. Also this state puts international communities in the United States in bad light. This has to be controlled through effective implementation of necessary preventive controls through appropriate regulations. Here's a link to another article that adds to this discussion:

<http://collapsereport.com/daily-news/h-1bs-using-fake-resumes-in-huge-numbers-to-escape-india-squalor/>



Why should people be forced to defend lies only to survive? All the education gained through hard work is rendered useless when smart individuals defend fake resumes and take up jobs that they have never done before. This state of flexi-staffing in the IT industry in United States may be quite similar to those in other countries across the globe but that doesn't make it right. I feel that smart and hard-working individuals being forced to defend fake resumes is a kind of intellectual human trafficking. A whole industry surviving on the misery of innocent individuals is highly disheartening. The struggling economy just adds to this. All murderers killed because at the time of the murder, that was their only choice of survival. All pimps who run brothels sell women for their livelihood because that is how they survive in a brothel. Need for survival does not necessarily emancipate any act of crime. Businesses need flexible workers and consultancies provide it but the workers do not want it.....they have no other choice but to accept it in place of a permanent employment. I am not opposed to temporary employment. I am opposed to individuals being forced/brain-washed to defend fake resumes.

I know a lot of people who were/are in the flexi-staffing system I have described above. I don't mean any disrespect to them or their professional abilities in any way. I wrote this post because I wanted to document this state of Flexi-Staffing (IT industry) in the United States and make the facts as I had observed available to you.

**Regards,**

The word "Motts" is written in a stylized, bubbly font. The letters are filled with a light blue color and have a thick white outline. The 'M' is particularly large and has a long, sweeping tail that curves under the 'o'. The 't's are also stylized with rounded tops. The overall appearance is that of a hand-drawn or digital brush-stroke signature.