

## **DRIVING RECRUITMENT BEST PRACTICE**

The Federation of African Professional Staffing Organisations (APSO) was established in 1977 and continues to represent its members in their dealings with government and related bodies. APSO promotes and ensures, for the benefit of both clients and candidates, the adherence to high ethical and professional standards of business.

The recruitment industry currently has no, or very low, barriers to entry and this means that clients could find themselves dealing with inexperienced or unprofessional operators. Given that the industry, particularly the temporary employment services (or labour broking as it's often referred to), is currently under the spotlight, this could be severely detrimental – and costly - to the client.

Many clients are unaware of the fact that, when using a Temporary Employment Service (TES) provider, they are jointly and severally liable in the case of contravention of the Basic Conditions of Employment Act, Bargaining Council collective agreements, binding arbitration and determinations under the Wage Act, as outlined in Section 198 of the Labour Relations Act. For this reason, clients should be extra careful when choosing their TES provider and rather choose to deal with an agency that is a member of a professional body such as APSO, or the Confederation Associations in the Private Employment Sector (CAPES).

CAPES is currently heading up the NEDLAC negotiations relating to the proposed regulation for the employment sector and APSO, as a founding member of CAPES, is perfectly positioned to provide our members – and their clients – with accurate, up-to-date information about the impending changes to the industry. It is critical during these uncertain times to have access to reliable information to inform your business decisions.

### **Setting standards**

APSO membership is not automatic and so any staffing company that wishes to join the professional body is required to meet certain minimum criteria before membership is granted. These include among others, legal compliance, professional standards of operation, fair labour practice and adherence to the APSO Code of Ethical & Professional Practice.

This code prescribes the minimum standards, including levels of services to clients and candidates, expected by APSO. It sets clear guidelines on issues such as search and selection, recruitment practices, reference checking, interviewing and fee dispute resolution, in the case of a dispute between two agencies. APSO is a proud member of the Institute of Ethics of South Africa and our code has been vetted accordingly. The code is aligned to international best practice standards and is recognised by various stakeholders, government and business alike, as the benchmark for professional recruitment in South Africa.

APSO is a proud member of the International Confederation of Private Employment Agencies (CIETT) and maintains active relationships with other international recruitment bodies to ensure that the South African industry remains on par with our global counterparts.

## **Driving professionalism**

In addition, APSO is focused on improving the professionalism of the recruitment industry by providing training and continuous professional development opportunities for our members and their employees. All APSO staffing consultants are expected to write the APSO Entrance Exam, a 10-module induction programme, designed to ensure that APSO accredited consultants are empowered to offer professional and compliant recruitment services.

At present APSO is awaiting formal recognition by the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) as the professional body for the staffing industry and once approved our three professional designations for individual staffing consultants will be ready for launch. APSO understands the importance of currency of knowledge, especially in the field of recruitment where clients and candidates are relying on their consultant to provide guidance. To this end, APSO is thrilled at the prospect of providing clients and candidates the opportunity to choose their consultant by assessing their professional designation and ensuring that they maintain continuous professional development.

Today, many client companies – public and private sector – choose only to deal with APSO member agencies and list this as a requirement for preferred supplier status.

### **Benefits to clients:**

- Access to advice and information pertaining to the staffing industry;
- Assistance with fee dispute resolution (between two member agencies);
- Recourse in the case of unprofessional business practices via the Ethics Arbitration Process;
- Knowledge that their recruitment partner has been vetted to ensure compliance and best practice.

For more information about APSO or to view the APSO Code of Ethical & Professional Practice, visit our website [www.apsco.co.za](http://www.apsco.co.za).

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