

The Future Rise Of The “Contributor” – Are We Closer To Finding That Elusive Third Category Of Worker?

Insights

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According to [a recent survey](#) by Randstad US, an HR and staffing services company a growing number of workers prefer to be known as “contributors” rather than employees or independent contractors. Reflecting a restlessness in the jobs market, with over 63% of Millennials aiming to leave their current jobs to join the sharing economy, this new trend could lead regulators to developing a hybrid third classification somewhere between “employee” and “contractor.” In other words, it could be the answer we’ve all been looking for to eliminate the troublesome misclassification lawsuits that have hurt the growth of the new and modern economy.

The report, titled “Demystifying The Future Workforce,” points out much of what we already know – the reasons why gig workers are drawn to their jobs is (flexible work hours, better pay, the ability to be one’s own boss, etc.). But where it gets interesting is when it asks workers to delve deeper into what they really want, and asks them to look to the future. 57% of respondents said the label “contributor” will be a better descriptor than “employee” for workers by 2025. The term “contributor” can be defined as “any human resource supplying effort toward an organization’s business objectives and goals.”

Imagine a world where a group of “contributors” recognize they aren’t employees but are something more than independent contractors. Perhaps they will accept a certain level of control from the company with whom they are working, but prefer to retain enough flexibility that they look different than the full-time employee. These workers will accept this paradigm without seeking legal recourse in the guise of a misclassification battle, and regulators could devise laws and legal rules to ensure proper classification of this hybrid new group of workers.

It’s still a dream, not close to a reality, but with each passing day we find a growing push towards changing the boundaries of the workplace to accommodate the burgeoning sharing economy. Could this be a step in the right direction?

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