



JAY WALLACE COMMENTS ON SHRM REGARDING RETAIL WORKFORCE CHANGES

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Partner [Jay M. Wallace](#) is quoted in the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) article titled, “Retail Revolution Challenges HR.” The piece explores how the retail workforce composition is changing in light of shifting consumer habits.

Wallace commented that retailers typically have a high percentage of part-time employees and also independent contractors, central to the burgeoning “gig economy.” He notes that often employers consider their workers classified as employees to be “a fungible commodity,” able to be scaled according to business demands. And, employers will often consider if employee tasks can be shifted to independent contractors, providing considerable benefit savings. He cautions, however, that retailers need to be circumspect about the use of independent contractors as workers whose hours are dictated by managers may not meet the federal definition of the classification.

Regarding the change in retail needs, Wallace adds that most employers will prefer hiring a new employee versus working to retrain a member of the current workforce whose skills are not easily transferrable. “Retailers are trying to be as nimble as possible when it comes to the workforce. Most would be inclined to hire someone fresh.”

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