



talent. defined.

SSi

Proving Value Under Pressure

How SSi People Delivered Compliant, Top-Ranked Workforce Support for a Northeast Ohio Utility

A case study in MSP performance, compliance, and growth in the energy & utilities sector

THE WORKFORCE PRESSURE FACING ENERGY & UTILITY COMPANIES

Energy and utility organizations are running two clocks at once: the pace of grid modernization, digital transformation, and major infrastructure investment, and the much slower pace at which qualified engineering, IT, and program talent can be found, vetted, and onboarded.

The numbers make the gap hard to ignore. The global power sector will need between 450,000 and 1.5 million additional engineers by 2030 to build and operate new energy infrastructure, according to a joint Kearney/IEEE study. Seventy-six percent of energy and utilities employers already report meaningful talent and skills gaps, and 40% of power industry executives say they're struggling to hire the skilled workers they need. Retention is just as strained — nearly half of all power engineers changed jobs, employers, or left the industry entirely within the past three years.

For utilities running structured MSP (managed service provider) programs, that pressure shows up as a specific, operational problem: how do you find suppliers who can deliver specialized talent quickly, hold up under strict compliance and rules-of-engagement requirements, and keep performing as the supplier pool itself gets smaller through rounds of rationalization?

That was the exact environment SSi People stepped into with a utilities company in Northeast Ohio.

CLIENT OVERVIEW

- Industry: Energy & Utilities
- Engagement type: Managed Service Provider (MSP) program — contingent workforce, multiple labor categories
- Labor categories: IT, Engineering, Professional/Non-IT
- Program structure: Competitive, multi-supplier MSP environment with defined rules of engagement and compliance requirements

THE CHALLENGE

SSi People was brought into the Ohio utility's MSP program as one of many suppliers competing for the same requisitions, under the same constraints every supplier in the program faced:

- Deliver specialized engineering, IT, and professional talent fast enough to keep infrastructure and compliance-driven projects on schedule
- Operate inside a defined MSP structure — rate cards, rules of engagement, and reporting requirements — with no room for shortcuts
- Build credibility with both the MSP program team and individual hiring managers, not just win a single placement
- Prove itself in an environment built for supplier rationalization, where consistently average performance eventually meant getting cut

OUR APPROACH

Step 1: Proving Value Through Performance

SSi People's engagement began with consistent delivery, responsiveness, and quality placements — fundamentals that too many suppliers treat as a baseline rather than a differentiator. By staying closely aligned with the MSP program team and prioritizing long-term fit over fast fills, SSi People built a reputation that outlasted any single requisition. That discipline translated directly into ranking: SSi People rose to #3 among all IT suppliers and #1 among all Professional/Non-IT suppliers in the Ohio utility's program — a track record built on program performance, not size or tenure.

Step 2: Turning Reputation Into Reach

Performance built inside one program doesn't automatically transfer to another — but reputation does. SSi People's results in Ohio caught the attention of a global utility with U.S. operations headquartered in New England. In 2016, when that utility's MSP evaluated its supplier population and found several incumbents falling short of program expectations, SSi People was brought in to help fill the gap.

The same approach that worked in Ohio — close MSP alignment, disciplined adherence to rules of engagement, and fast, high-caliber delivery — carried over directly, and SSi People quickly became a go-to supplier in the new program as well.

Step 3: Surviving — and Rising Through — Supplier Rationalization

In early 2020, that MSP program determined its 48-supplier vendor population was too large and began a rationalization process that played out over multiple rounds across two years, cutting suppliers in every labor category — IT, Engineering, and Professional.

SSi People didn't just survive the cuts. It rose through them — ending up as one of just 7 remaining suppliers in IT, one of 12 in Engineering, and one of 12 in Professional, retaining a top-tier position in all three labor categories through every round of reduction.

THE RESULTS

#1 Professional / Non-IT supplier ranking (Ohio utility program)	#3 IT supplier ranking (Ohio utility program)	3 of 3 labor categories retained through multiple rationalizations	48 → 7 vendor pool reduced — SSi People retained in IT
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WHY IT MATTERS

For energy and utility organizations managing their own MSP programs, the takeaway isn't just that SSi People delivers — it's that SSi People keeps delivering under exactly the conditions that expose weaker suppliers: strict compliance requirements, competitive rate environments, and periodic rationalization designed to weed out inconsistent performance. That combination — speed and quality without cutting corners on compliance — is increasingly what separates a workforce partner from a workforce vendor.

Contact SSi People today to learn how our track record of delivery, program partnership, and performance-driven growth can strengthen your MSP program across IT, Engineering, and Professional labor categories.



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