

Client: Hamilton Bradshaw
Source: Evening Standard (Main)
Date: 15 April 2013
Page: 40
Reach: 699338
Size: 124cm2
Value: 7773.56



HAMILTON BRADSHAW
Investing in people with passion

Zero-hour contracts can be a cost saver for start-ups

Ask James



James Caan

Dear James

I have recently started a catering company and I'm wondering whether I should employ staff on zero-hour contracts or have freelancers if and when I need them. What are the pros and cons?
Sav

SAV, zero-hour contracts are a hot topic and there is much debate to whether this is a good option for both employers and employees.

For start-up firms such as yours, it can be a real cost saver, especially in an industry like catering where demand often fluctuates.

The set-up also benefits employees who want occasional earnings. One group you may think about targeting are retired people who have worked in catering. They will have the skills and experience, as well as the free time. They may not be looking for regular commitment, so flexible work is perfect for them.

However, zero-hour contracts are clearly not for everybody. People who require constant, fixed hours and the security of knowing exactly when their next payslip is coming probably wouldn't consider this.

I would also urge you to consider whether casual workers add enough value. It may be efficient from a financial point of view, but remember that permanent staff members will have more of an attachment to the company. They

will be able to understand you and your vision better than anybody else. As important as the finances are, the passion of the people within the company can take it to the next level.

■ For the full article and news of James Caan's free app, go to standard.co.uk/askjames. His book, *How to Start Your Business in 7 Days*, is out now.