

Aviation Personnel International Celebrates 50 Years in Business Aviation Recruiting at #NBAA2022

Aviation Personnel International (API)—helmed by Sheryl A. Barden—will celebrate its 50th anniversary at the NBAA Business Aviation Convention & Exhibition.

SAN FRANCISCO, CA, UNITED STATES, October 17, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- In July 1971, Janice K. Barden, a professional aviation psychologist with a talent for assessing pilot candidates for employment, became the first woman in business aviation to found a recruitment company: [Aviation Personnel International](https://apiaviation.com) (apiaviation.com). Flash forward 50 years and the API team—now helmed by Janice's daughter, Sheryl A. Barden—will celebrate its 50th anniversary at this year's [NBAA Business Aviation Convention & Exhibition](#) in Orlando.



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Sheryl A. Barden, President & CEO, Aviation Personnel International

Over that half-century, API's motto has become 'It's all about people.' The mission of the [aviation recruiting firm](#) is to match high-quality candidates with top-tier aviation employers—all while building a sense of community and helping high-caliber aviation professionals see their full potential. Echoing that mission, Sheryl A. Barden, API's President and CEO said, “The most important investment in business aviation is your people. And at API, we're here to help our clients hire and develop the best of the best.”

One business aviation leader recently said of API, “The company comprises a well-rounded team of professionals

working very hard to match the needs of each customer's department with outstanding individuals in our industry. This business is all about fit. API gets that and strives to find the right fit for every company and individual they represent.”

The API team has witnessed significant changes in business aviation in the past 10 years. Due to

the industry's rapid growth, these changes require attention to ensure progress. Among them:

The need for diversity, equity, and inclusion (DE&I):

The API team recognizes that diversity and inclusion is a looming issue that demands greater focus. After all, the aviation industry as a whole hasn't kept up with other STEM industries (engineering, etc.) in recruiting women and people of color. It's clear that business aviation continues to be heavily weighted by its employment of white males.

API's Vice President, Jennifer Pickerel, has emphasized the point on numerous occasions, saying, "We cannot achieve diversity without practicing inclusion. And the more our departments learn how to be inclusive, the faster we can reach a point of true diversity in our industry ranks."

Changes in role descriptions and expectations:

- The role of aviation director has evolved, as they are now tasked with leading a strategic business unit, instead of managing what many years ago was referred to as a 'royal barge.'

Barden noted: "Fifty years ago, flying privately was considered an executive 'perk,' and a corporate flight department was an island unto itself, with its own checkbook. Today, aviation directors are responsible for reporting on the aircraft usage, and that includes documenting its usage in annual reports and on personal use taxes."

- Maintenance is becoming more of an IT/engineering domain, instead of that of a hands-on laborer. Pickerel: "I think this shift in perception matters to parents who are helping their high schoolers choose a lucrative career. Today's maintenance professional is a mix of fixing and maintaining, plus the important component of understanding avionics, technology, and communications."
- The position of cabin safety attendant has changed dramatically. Barden: "Once primarily known for food service, a cabin safety professional now must be a tech guru, responsible for all of the communications and cabin entertainment systems, on top of being responsible for the safety of the passengers."
- The role of the scheduler has evolved as their responsibilities far outstrip those of past decades. Thanks in part to the pandemic, schedulers have also proven that they can successfully work a flexible schedule, often in remote locations.

Generational distinctions:

Especially regarding the desire for work/life balance, Pickerel emphasizes that Gen X, Millennial and Gen Z workforces have completely different needs and expectations than those of baby boomers and traditionalists. She noted: "Work/life balance and professional development has become much more a critical component of hiring and retention efforts."

The talent shortage:

Barden has been an outspoken advocate regarding the need to refocus and rebuild the nature of bizav's talent recruitment, development, and retention. "We especially need to attract, train and retain pilots and maintenance professionals," she said. "Unfortunately, we don't have young people going into aircraft maintenance. And when someone earns their A&P license, they're often lured to join competitive industries, including auto racing, alternative energy, UAM, rockets, and mass transit." Barden also believes we aren't training enough pilots. "In another 10 years, I don't think we'll have many 40-year-old pilots in business aviation. Our traditional pipeline 'feeders'—the military and regional airlines—are all bypassing business aviation for the airline pay and schedule. That's a major shift that affects supply and demand, as well as compensation."

To combat the bizav pilot shortage, Barden said: "Our focus should be on recruiting younger pilots from the airlines before they reach captain status. Before they get to the second half of their career, we need to recruit them one-by-one, and ask 'Are you dissatisfied? Are you willing to take the leap and come to business aviation for a different lifestyle and community environment? And we must compensate them competitively with the airlines.'"

To learn more about API's recruitment process and compensation consulting, please call 1-(415) 751-3250, or visit apiaviation.com. Or, to schedule an interview during NBAA2022, complete this form at apiaviation.com/contact-us.

About API

Founded in 1971, Aviation Personnel International (apiaviation.com) is the longest-running business aviation recruiting firm serving the hiring needs of business aviation and private aviation. A certified Women-Owned Small Business and Women's Business Enterprise, API offers its clients the broadest portfolio of fully vetted candidates, including senior aviation leaders, pilots, maintenance, cabin safety crew, schedulers and dispatchers. Headquartered in San Francisco with remote offices nationwide, API's team members combine their extensive aviation knowledge with their expertise in human resources to provide retained recruitment, compensation consulting and outplacement services.

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