

Temp Your Way to a New Career

You may think that working as a temporary or contract employee is merely a way to make some money while you look for a permanent job - but it can be much more. Temporary work gives you an opportunity to look at companies from the inside; not just from a job description. It gives you the chance to show people who you are and what you can do; not just your resume.

More employers are hiring for attitude, not just aptitude these days. You can show them your attitude much better from within the company. Today's temporary employers have needs for a wide range of administrative, technical, and professional positions. Employers bring in temporary employees to address normal fluctuations in a company's workflow, as contingency workers to fill positions that are temporarily vacant, and as a source for trying out permanent employees.

There's a common misconception among temporary employees that there's no need to treat a temporary job as seriously as a permanent one. On the contrary, employers often express similar expectations of temporary employees as they would when hiring for a permanent position. Since there is normally minimal training time available, employers appreciate temporary employees who can hit the ground running and show initiative to get the job done.

Temporary jobs can range from one day to more than a year. If you perform your duties well and establish a solid professional relationship with others, you may be first in line to leap to a more permanent position.

How to be a Standout Temp

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Demonstrate integrity

Be honest with your recruiter about your skills and availability. This helps your recruiter present you accurately for positions that fit your qualifications. If you become aware of an open position at a company where you are temping, call your recruiter to inform them of your interest. They will pursue that position on your behalf. This creates a relationship of trust between candidate and recruiter.

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Be punctual

Always be on time to your temporary position. If you are running late or have an emergency, call your recruiter to let them know your situation, so they can communicate the problem to the employer.

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Be a team player

If the work you are assigned to do on your temporary assignment is complete, ask the others around you if they need any help with their work. Also, if someone asks you to assist them while you are working, try to help them out. Teamwork makes your job a lot more enjoyable, and you are able to gain valuable experience in other areas.

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Think outside the box

Try to come up with better ways or more efficient ways of completing your work and ask your supervisor if you may try them. Many companies welcome ideas and are appreciative of any suggestions you may have for them. This shows an employer you care about your work and the company!

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Have a "can do" attitude

If your employer on your temporary assignment asks you to do something new, give it a try. Learning something new could lead you down a career path you never thought about taking!

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Show stability and consistent work performance

Don't accept a temporary position unless you are certain you are available and can complete the assignment given!

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Treat each temporary assignment like a permanent position

Prove to the client that you are a reliable, dedicated, and hard working employee that they should want to hire for a permanent position.

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Report your availability

If you are actively seeking temporary assignments, call your recruiter each week to update your availability, so they know you're ready to work.

Think of all that temporary work has a lot to offer you as a job seeker: it gives you the opportunity to earn income while conducting your job search, and allows you to try out a variety of companies and industries for a better job fit. Temporary work gives you a chance to learn additional skills and build up your resume. There are many software and skills particular to specific industries that would

certainly give you a "leg up" on your competition.

If you follow the steps above, and take advantage of each temporary job as an opportunity to network and gain new contacts and experience, you'll increase your chances of being asked back for more work, and possibly a permanent position. Temporary workers who are enthusiastic, punctual, professional, and show initiative about their assignments, however brief, stand out.