



How to Get a Job Through a Staffing Agency

Description

Some job seekers don't want to use a staffing agency because they think these agencies only provide entry-level, temporary jobs. Others think that agencies never provide benefits to workers. None of this is true.



A job seeker can use a staffing agency (also known as an employment agency or staffing company) to find a wide variety of jobs, including permanent jobs, in a number of industries. Staffing agencies hire everyone from entry-level workers to CEOs. Learn what a staffing agency is and how to use one to find the right job for you.

How a Staffing Agency Works

At a staffing agency, companies pay the agency to find employees for them. Job seekers can apply to specific jobs through the staffing agency, or can simply contact the staffing agency looking for a job. The agency interviews the job seekers and places them in appropriate positions. Typically, the agency then pays the selected candidate to work for the client company.

If the company decides to hire the job seeker permanently, the staffing agency will no longer pay the job seeker. The employee will instead be paid by the company.

Benefits

There are many benefits to using a staffing agency to find a job. Some benefits include:

It's Free

Because the company (rather than the job seeker) is the client, you don't have to pay to be considered for jobs at an agency.

They Do the Job Searching for You

When you sign up to work with a staffing agency, they ask you about your skills and experience and let you know if they have a job that might be a good fit for you. You can also search for jobs on their internal job site. Often, they know of job openings that aren't available on other job sites. It is a great way to get help finding job openings.

There Is Variety

You can find staffing agencies that specialize in almost any industry. You can also find different types of jobs within almost any staffing agency. Jobs range from very short-term positions (as little as a couple of weeks) to permanent positions.

There Are Often Benefits

Some staffing agencies provide benefits after employees have worked a certain number of days or hours. These benefits may include health insurance, a retirement plan, or even tuition reimbursement (or all three).

They Give You Feedback

Most staffing agencies provide you with feedback throughout the job application process. They might give you tips on how to revise your resume or provide advice on how to successfully interview. This kind of free feedback is invaluable.

Types of Available Jobs

Some people think staffing agencies only fill temporary secretarial and administrative jobs, but this is not the case. You can find a job in almost every industry through a staffing agency.

Some staffing agencies (including Kelly Services and Adecco) work with all kinds of companies, while others specialize in particular industries. Medical Solutions, for example, focuses on healthcare jobs. TEKsystems staffs companies with IT hires.

Agencies also offer jobs that last for varying lengths of time. These include:

Temporary Jobs

Companies often look for temporary hires to help during an employee's absence or period of leave, or during a busy work period. Sometimes they hire temporary workers to complete a particular project. These temporary jobs range in length from a couple of weeks to many months.

Temp-to-Hire Jobs

Also known as temp-to-perm jobs, these positions begin as temporary jobs so that the company can get to know the employee on a trial basis. Then, if the company is happy with the employee's work, they will likely hire him or her directly. While the staffing agency will typically pay for the worker during the temporary phase, the company will then take over paying the employee when he or she becomes a full-time hire.

Permanent Jobs

Some staffing agencies hire candidates for permanent positions at companies. In these situations, the agency works more like a traditional recruiter, finding, interviewing, and selecting candidates for the company. In this case, the company pays the agency a fee. If the company hires an employee, they pay for the employee.

Many agencies offer a variety of all three of these kinds of jobs, although some specialize. For example, Frontline Source Group focuses on hiring temporary workers.

How to Find the Right Staffing Agency for You

When you are looking for a staffing agency to work with, make sure you know the kinds of industries the agency deals with, and whether they offer temporary, temp-to-hire, or permanent jobs—or all three.

Check out the American Staffing Association's online directory to find reputable staffing firms. You can search for firms in your area. You can also search by employment options (temporary, long-term, etc.) and industry.

When you interview with a staffing agency, feel free to ask questions. Ask about what benefits (if any)

they offer, what kinds of jobs they typically fill, the industries they work with, and the average time it takes for a job seeker to land a job. The recruiter you work with is there to help you, so don't be afraid to gather all the information you need.

Check into whether or not the agency has any services, such as workshops to help you develop skills or counselors who will help you with your resume and cover letter. If these are available, take advantage of them.

Also, keep in mind that you should never have to pay a staffing agency to help you find a job. Reputable staffing agencies are paid by companies, not by job seekers.

Tips for Landing a Job

Treat it Like a Real Interview

The staffing agency will likely set up an interview with you to get a better sense of your skills and experience. Treat this interview exactly as you would an interview with a company. Dress appropriately and show up on time—early, if possible. Listen attentively and use positive body language to convey your attention and interest. Introduce yourself with a firm handshake. Bring your resume and be ready to answer common interview questions. You might also be asked to complete a skills assessment to test your hard skills, so be prepared for this as well.

Be Honest

Be honest about your goals, whether it's to land a permanent position, maintain flexibility, or to develop some skills that will make you an attractive candidate for your next full-time job. Also, be honest about your availability. If you are only available on weekdays, for example, tell this to the recruiter at the staffing agency. Finally, be honest about your employment history. If you have an employment gap, for example, tell the recruiter. He or she can help you figure out how to explain this to an employer.

Keep an Open Mind

Even if you want a full-time position, consider being open to temporary jobs or contract work. These can help you develop skills that might be useful when you apply for your next full-time job. If you impress an employer, he or she might try to find you a full-time position at the company.

Follow Up

Send an emailed or handwritten note to thank the interviewers at the staffing agency for their time and to reinforce your interest in finding a position.

Be Persistent and Patient

If you applied for a job through a staffing agency and haven't heard back, follow up within a week. Perhaps you were not right for that specific job, but a recruiter might be able to find something else that fits your skill set. Check in with any staffing firm you've contacted once a week to remind them of your

interest and demonstrate your eagerness.

Use Other Resources

You do not have to put all your eggs in one basket. While you wait to hear back from the agency, continue to job search on your own. Check out job boards and job search engines and network with people in your industry. However, be open with your recruiter—tell him or her if you apply to any jobs on your own and if you are working with a second staffing agency. This way your recruiter will not submit you for a job that you already applied for (in some cases, an employer will remove your application if he or she sees it twice).

When You Get a Job, Prepare

When you receive an assignment, the agency will provide you with information as to whom to report, dress code, hours, wages, and a description of the duties and duration of the job. You might also need to do a second interview with the company. If you don't receive all of this information, ask the agency for all of this information.

You Can Say No

If you truly feel a position is not a good fit—perhaps the hours do not work for you, or the pay is well below what you need—be honest with the recruiter. Explain to him or her why you don't want the position. It will help the recruiter find you a job that is a better fit in the future.

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