

# Searching for Work in the Temporary Staffing Services Industry

## Objectives

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1. Obtain information about job hunting in the *contingent workforce*, sometimes called the *temporary staffing services industry*.
2. Learn basic terms and language used to describe temporary work.
3. Develop strategies for searching for and securing temporary work.

## The Language of Temporary Staffing

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### Contingent Workforce

The word “contingent” means uncertain, accidental, chance, dependent, and unforeseen. Contingent work depends on the employer’s immediate needs. Some employers are now using contingent workers to fill 30-80% of their jobs. Contingent workers do not have a contract or commitment for ongoing employment--the work is time-limited. These are not “permanent” jobs, but they could last for days or years.

### Related Terms

Other words associated with contingent workers include temporary services, temporary staff, temps, employee leasing, flexible staffing, outsourcing, freelancing, consultants, co-employees, on-call workers, independent contractors, flexible staff, supplementals, peripherals, OPS (other personnel services), or interns.

**Temps:** These are contingent workers who do not expect to stay with the current employer more than a year, who have a job with a specified ending date. An important distinction needs to be made regarding *temporary employment* and *working for a temporary services company or temp agency*. If one has continuing employment with a temporary services company, then the work is permanent, not temporary or contingent. This means that one can have permanent employment with a temp agency.

**Temping:** The person actually doing the work is known as an “employee” or a “contractor,” and the temporary help organization is known as the “employer.” The organization for whom temporary employment services are being provided is known as the “client;” the client pays any fees for the employment service. The services are provided at no charge to you (the employee), but the client pays the employer for these staffing services.

**Private employment agency:** It acts as your agent in helping you find employment; it does not hire you as a contingent employee. Unlike a temp agency, an employment agency may charge you (the employee) a fee for its services.

## Trends And Issues

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- An average of 3 million people are employed weekly by staffing companies in the U.S.
- About 20% of employers (clients) use temp jobs to screen for their permanent employees. This can lead to a “buyout” or “temp-to-hire” wherein an employee moves from temporary to permanent employment status.
- 76% of temporary employees work full-time.
- 11 million persons are hired by staffing companies annually.
- Most staffing companies offer health insurance, as well as vacation and holiday pay, and many offer retirement plans.
- Many professional positions, e.g., lawyers, accountants, physicians, computer specialists, are available through temporary staffing agencies.
- Almost every worker can expect to be unemployed at some time, and temporary staffing companies can help a job hunter fill these employment gaps.

Source: American Staffing Association, 2014 Economic Analysis

## Job Hunting Tips

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Follow these guidelines when seeking employment with a temporary staffing services agency:

1. **Be clear and honest about the kind of work you want.** The temp agency will use your preferences to develop a successful match with a potential client. It is in the employer’s interest for you to succeed in the job.
2. **Apply to and be on the roster with several different temp agencies** rather than just one; this way you have several employers pursuing your job interests.
3. **Keep negotiating and working collaboratively** with the employer to get you into a higher level and/or permanent position.
4. **Pursue as many networking, leadership, teamwork, and training experiences that you possibly can.**

5. **Report the work experience on your résumé**, remembering that the temp agency is your employer and that your job description would both describe your duties and name the client and location.
6. **Research employing organizations** to find out which temporary staffing agency has the hiring contract for that organization. Temping may provide an “insider’s view” of the organizational culture.

## How to Find Staffing Companies

The Yellow Pages ([www.yp.com](http://www.yp.com)) will have listings of temporary staffing organizations, usually under the heading of “Employment Contract-Temporary Help”. Below are some Tallahassee organizations and their contact information. Some of these organizations are national franchisees and others are locally owned. These organizations might be especially interested in hiring persons with technical and college training.

- **Adecco** — (850) 561-8715  
[www.adecco-tlh.net](http://www.adecco-tlh.net)
- **Cardinal Staffing**, Tallahassee — (850) 513-3000  
[www.cardinalservicesinc.com](http://www.cardinalservicesinc.com)
- **Kelly Services** — (850) 297-2040  
[www.kellyservices.com](http://www.kellyservices.com)
- **Manpower** — (850) 386-8150  
[www.manpower.com](http://www.manpower.com)
- **Remedy Intelligent Staffing** — (850) 523-0005  
[www.remedystaff.com](http://www.remedystaff.com)

The American Staffing Association ([www.americanstaffing.net](http://www.americanstaffing.net)) represents the U.S. staffing industry and can provide additional information.

## Summary

This guide has provided some basic information about the contingent workforce and the temporary staffing services industry. There is evidence that increasing numbers of college graduates will find their first jobs in this industry, ultimately working in many different public, private, and nonprofit organizations.

## Temp Work May Be Fitting for You If:

- You are willing to start at lower-level positions in an organization in order to develop insider information about permanent positions.
- You are willing to work for different organizations (clients) in different locations in a short period of time.
- You want to be visible to employers who are looking for someone with your skills.
- You do not need a lot of permanent job security right now.
- You are relocating to another city and don’t want to accept “permanent” employment right away.
- You want a decent income and secure health benefits.
- You desire a more flexible lifestyle, e.g., work hours, days, or work.
- You would benefit from having an “agent” who can help you market your skills in the community.
- You want to maintain a stable work history without getting stuck in jobs you don’t like.
- You are interested in a more relaxed hiring process as a “temp.”
- You would like to get training in new job skills areas, e.g., word processing, database creation.
- You would like to try out new occupations or industries without making a commitment to the field.
- You have varied skills, e.g., consulting, information processing, that would enable you to function as an independent contractor.
- You do not want to make long-term commitments to a permanent employer.

## Additional Resources

### Select Career Center Library Resources

*Best Career and Education Web Sites:*

- A Quick Guide to Online Job Search*.....VD W6  
*Executive Temp*.....IB T45

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