

Between February and March 2009, it is estimated that 742,000 U.S. jobs were cut. With major companies experiencing hiring freezes and layoffs, professionals across the nation are searching through online job boards, newspaper classifieds and employment weeklies, only to reach a dead end. Rest assured, turning to a professional staffing agency may shed some light on searching for steady work.

Contrary to popular misconceptions that exist regarding staffing agencies, when utilized properly, they can be a great resource for seeking employment. In fact, the professional staffing industry has significantly increased in popularity and become a common source job seekers are turning to during the current economic climate.

Staffing Company Definition & How to Apply

A staffing company serves as a job bank that matches qualified employees with positions their client companies need assistance filling. For example, an employee may be on medical leave and a company needs someone to temporarily fill in for them during their absence. Or, a company may need assistance with a project that none of their current employees have the skills to execute. Professional staffing companies will step in and assist their clients with filling these positions. Most often these are short-term or long-term but they can also be what is commonly referred to as direct hire or permanent.

Most staffing agency websites list all of the positions they have available by city or region and allow job seekers to submit a resume and apply online.

Professional staffing companies are fairly easy to find – they exist in almost any city and can be found all over the internet. Simply run an online search for “staffing companies,” “staffing firms” or even “employment agencies” and you’ll receive a large number of results. Most staffing agency websites list all of the positions they have available by city or region and allow job seekers to submit a resume and apply online. Once a job seeker’s application is reviewed, if the agency thinks they are an excellent match for an open position, they will contact them to schedule an in-person interview and may also administer a short test to measure and identify strengths and abilities such as typing, 10 key, accounting, spelling and grammar, customer service and fine motor skills.

Provide Access to A Variety of Jobs

One of the greatest benefits of working with a staffing company is the variety of jobs they provide candidates access to. Most are well connected to a plethora of

businesses and can put job seekers in touch with many employers within a particular region.

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Though most staffing companies assist their clients with hiring temporary employees for seasonal or contract work, many also offer permanent positions. In addition, oftentimes temporary positions will eventually turn into full-time or permanent ones. According to about.com, two million people are employed by staffing companies daily and over 79% of temporary employees work full time.

Kick-Start for Recent Grads

Lately, high school and college graduates are finding themselves unemployed from six months up to a year or more after graduating. Frustrated, they may not know exactly what they want to do for a living, other than the fact that they want a stable career they can appreciate. By applying with a staffing agency, recent graduates can gain access to companies in one of two ways: on a temporary or temporary to hire basis, or they can be directly hired by a company for a full-time position.

According to the American Staffing Association’s website, 40% of employees who are kick-starting their career or reentering the job market have done so through a professional staffing company.

Common Misconceptions Regarding Professional Staffing Companies

As mentioned, a number of misconceptions exist regarding the professional staffing industry. Here’s a snapshot of just a few and the REAL truth behind them.

Misconception 1: Staffing companies do not offer “real” jobs, only temporary ones.

Truth: Staffing companies do offer “real” jobs at “real” companies like Wells Fargo, Target, American Airlines, Boston Scientific, Amazon, Continental Airlines, Microsoft, Proctor & Gamble, Starbucks and more. Companies big and small have budgets set aside to hire only a certain amount of full-time employees, which is often based upon profitability. Therefore, it’s also necessary for them to roll into their budget funds to hire temporary staff to handle demand fluctuations. Most likely, when the company converts a temporary position to a full-time role, the

current temporary employee will be the ideal candidate for the full time position.

Misconception 2: All positions available through staffing companies are low paying.

Truth: Most likely, this is not the case as pay is usually in line with the candidate's experience, whether it is entry or senior level. Staffing companies also encourage their staff to leverage career opportunities and move to the next level, as it is a positive reflection upon them when they hire someone who positively contributes to their client's organization.

Misconception 3: Staffing companies only work with entry-level candidates.

Truth: Today there are a number of specialty firms that place entry level to professional and managerial candidates in multiple fields. They often staff administrative, customer service, creative, engineering, finance & accounting, information technology and manufacturing positions. In addition, agencies that are more general in nature, work with companies that offer opportunities for candidates who are looking to get their foot in the door or change industries.

Misconception 4: Staffing companies only offer temporary assignments that last a few weeks.

Truth: This depends on the job assignment. Those that are not permanent or direct hire can vary from one day to more than nine months. If the company is pleased with the temporary employee's work, they may offer the employee full-time employment. Or the temporary employee's work history and reputation will encourage the staffing company to promote them to other great career opportunities as they arise. This is also a great way for job seekers to "test drive" the companies they work for – allowing them to gain a better understanding of the company culture, supervisor and type of work they prefer.

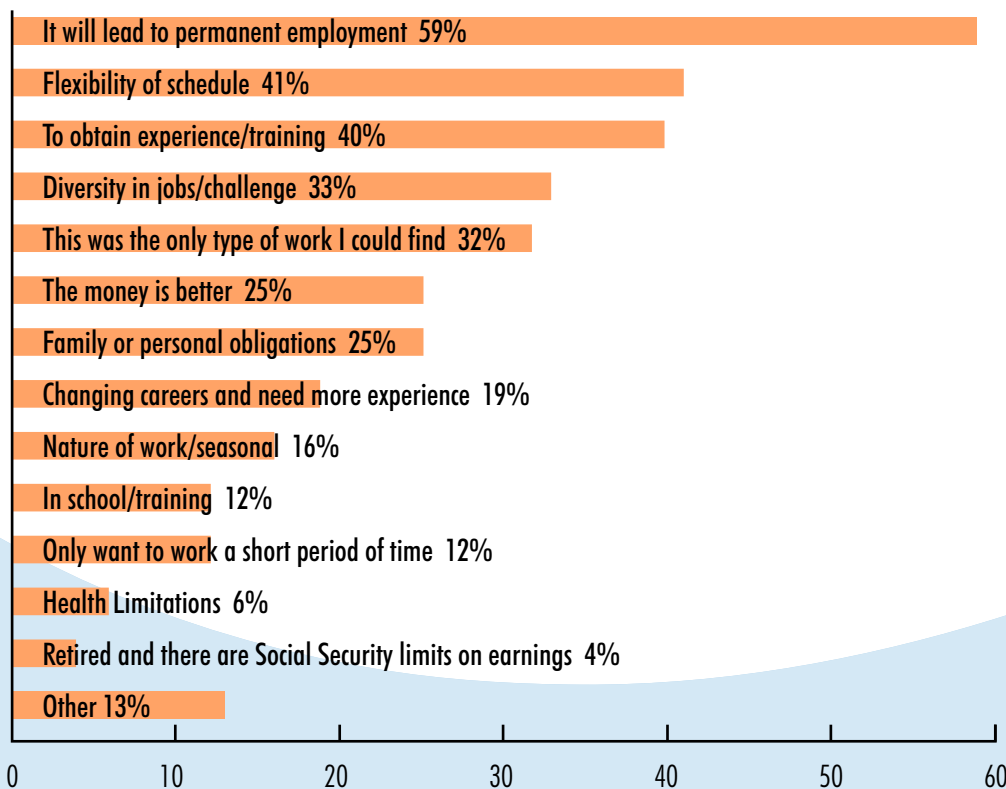
Misconception 5: The temporary jobs available through staffing companies don't offer benefits.

Truth: Many staffing companies do offer benefits to all of the temporary employees they hire including direct deposit, holiday & sick pay, health, vision, dental and life insurance, employee referral bonuses, 401K investing and more.

Not only has professional staffing grown to be a highly professionalized industry, it has also provided job seekers unique career entry points and opportunities not found anywhere else. Turning to a professional staffing company for employment can help individuals identify a career they want or at minimum, guide them in a direction towards it.

PS. For additional articles of interest, see prostaff.com.

Reasons to work with a staffing company



Source: Career Builder Poll