



How To Turn Your Temp Job into a Full-Time Job

Donna Fuscaldo | June 03, 2014

Temporary workers are no longer just that. Increasingly companies are using temp and contractors to find full time employees, relying on short term projects to weed out the good and the bad. That's great news for [job seekers](#) looking to land a full time job. But it doesn't mean every temp worker is going to transition into an employee.

"Test driving employees is a great way to get to know a candidate, before making the full investment of bringing them onboard permanently," says Joel Garfinkle, author of *Getting Ahead: Three Steps to Take Your Career to the Next Level*. "Obviously, what each employer is specifically looking for during this 'test drive' is different. However, there are some general factors that usually help determine whether or not a temp successfully transitions to full-time."

From treating the assignment as an on the [job interview](#) to going above and beyond, here's a look at ways career experts say you can parlay a [temp job](#) into a full time one.

When it comes to working as a contractor or temp with an eye toward making it a permanent job, career experts say you have to carefully choose where you are temping. After all, you may be an expert in [marketing](#), but if you take a temp position as a [receptionist](#) is it really something you would want to do full-time? "You want to pick (a temp) job that most closely resembles what it is you want to do permanently," says Tom Wharton, Managing Partner with OI Global Partners, the career consulting firm. "If something is too far out in left field you won't do it well and you won't last long in the assignment."

Even if you are hired to simply answer phones and make copies, you have to treat the assignment as the equivalent of an interview and act accordingly. "Don't under estimate the watchful eye and the impact you are making while doing your job," says Paul McDonald, senior executive director

with [Robert Half](#). “The impression you are making while on the job speaks volumes to those around you.”

For technical roles, it's likely you were given the assignment because of your skills. While it's important to showcase those needed skills during your temporary work, experts say you also want to demonstrate you possess the soft skills like being a great communicator, flexibility and a penchant for being a team player. If you are able to show your boss and co-workers that you listen and play nice with others it can compensate for any weaknesses in your technical skills. “The other most important factor an employer is test driving is the qualitative aspects of the candidate,” says Garfinkle. “How are their personal skills? Do they fit well with the other team members? Are they able to communicate effectively? These are things you hope to get a feel for during an interview, but really can't know for sure how it'll go until the candidate is actually in place and interacting with everyone.”

Going above and beyond cannot be understated if you want the temp job to become full-time. Not only do you want to do your job to the best of your ability but you also want to volunteer for extra work and help co-workers in a pinch. Wharton has had clients who did so well during their contract assignment that they ended up replacing a current full-time employee who wasn't at the same level. “Being a team player is very important,” says Wharton, noting it behooves people to try to work with other departments as well as their own so that they come into contact with all the different department heads. “You want to be recognized as a key contributor and somebody who believes in the company and its mission,” he says.

Most people aren't mind readers, and that's particularly true of hiring managers, which is why McDonald says it's important to communicate your interest in working for the company on a permanent basis. Not only do you want to let your boss or bosses know that but you should also alert the staffing firm, which may have a contract with the company. McDonald says to ask if there is an opportunity for the role to transition to full time, then be flexible about taking on jobs in other departments that you may be qualified for. “If you want to parlay it into a full time position then demonstrate your flexibility,” says McDonald. “Let them know you are interested because not every temp is interested in full time employment.”