LOOKING TO INCREASE YOUR PAYCHECK?
Why Temp Positions Are The Answer
Whether you're just entering the “real world” after finishing college, re-entering the workforce after taking some time off or simply looking for a better-paying job, finding a temporary or contract position could be exactly what you need.

It's easy to think that full-time positions are the best answer when looking for a new job. But many people don't realize that temporary and contract positions can actually pay more and offer more long-term benefits than typical salaried positions.

Temporary workers are playing an increasingly significant role in the U.S. workforce, as companies look to these short-term positions to help them deal with a competitive and evolving pool of potential employees.
According to an article on Forbes.com, flexibility is the second most important perk sought out by today’s workers. The article also cited research that showed that flex work schedules made employees more loyal, and the employees surveyed said they’d work more hours, take a pay cut and even give up health benefits for this perk.

Employees who had flexible work schedules showed less stress and burnout while stating they were happier with their jobs and their tenure at each job was longer, according to the Forbes article.

Flexible work schedules also help create a more diverse workforce, attracting veterans, people with disabilities, former retirees returning to work and other groups. It also appeals to women who want to stay in the workforce while still being present to raise their children, the Forbes article said.

In order to meet these employee needs as well as fluctuating business and market demands, many companies are using temporary workers to develop a more agile and responsive team of workers.

According to CareerBuilder’s annual job forecast, 51% of companies are expected to hire contract or temporary workers, up from 47% last year. They also forecasted that almost 200,000 new temp jobs will be added over the next three years, creating 7% overall growth.

So what should workers consider when looking at temporary vs. full-time jobs? Here are several key areas to evaluate before taking your next job:

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WHAT DOES THE TEMP MARKET LOOK LIKE IN PENNSYLVANIA?

The temporary job market is very robust in Pennsylvania, with an average of 114,300 temporary workers working each week. There are about 516,900 temporary workers hired by staffing agencies each year in the state. The average annual earnings per temp job is $36,100, according to the American Staffing Association.

Half of the temporary workers in Pennsylvania are between 25-44, with 31% between 45-64 and 19% between 19-24. A little more than half of all temp workers (54%) are men.

In September 2017, the unemployment rate was 4.8%, down from 5.0% in July 2017. That same month, the state's unemployment rate was marginally higher than the U.S. unemployment rate of 4.2%, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

As unemployment continues to fall in Pennsylvania, many companies will look to staffing agencies to help fill their open jobs. With the potential pool of unemployed workers shrinking, more companies will have to get creative as they look to fill these open positions. That could result in increased pay, more job flexibility and more benefits as businesses look to attract the best workers the state has to offer.

Major companies such as Amazon are investing in the Philly area, bringing clothing manufacturing plants to the metro area along with new jobs. As both new and existing businesses continue to expand, the demand for temporary, contract and full-time work is expected to grow.

TOP INDUSTRIES FOR TEMP WORK

While the temp market is forecasted to remain strong, there are three industries that are expected to exceed the national average hiring numbers, according to CareerBuilder's annual job forecast.
The IT industry is leading the way, with 75% of IT companies surveyed planning to hire temporary workers. Developers of software applications were the most in demand, with temp jobs expected to grow 7% over the next three years, according to the survey. With median hourly earnings of $47.68, software developers were the most highly compensated employees on the list.

Manufacturing is the second highest, with 59% of companies expecting to hire temp workers. In this field, demand for machinists was projected to climb 10% over the next three years. With a $19.63 median hourly wage, they were the fifth highest earners on the list.

Large healthcare organizations are third, with 56% planning to bring on temporary workers. Registered nurses are highly in demand, with this group expected to grow 6% over the next three years. With median hourly earnings of $33.83, they were the second most highly-paid, trailing only the software developers.

In addition to those industries, there were several individual positions that are expected to see significant growth. Temporary positions for accountants and auditors are expected to grow 7% over the next three years, while HR specialists jobs were expected to grow 6% in the same time period, according to the CareerBuilder survey.

**HOW LUCRATIVE IS TEMP WORK?**

Depending on the position, contract work can easily exceed that of similar salaried positions. For example, staff nurses can expect to make an average of $54,800 a year, compared to $67,100 a year for temp positions, according to Monster.com.
Other top contract positions include:

- Database administrator: Salaried positions average $64,100 vs. $77,300 for contractor positions
- Physical therapist: Salaried positions average $68,000 vs. $80,700 for contractor positions
- Systems administrator: Salaried positions average $51,000 vs. $58,300 for contractor positions
- Web developer: Salaried positions average $52,600 vs. $59,700 for contractor positions
- Heavy equipment operator: Salaried positions average $37,100 vs. $40,900 for contractor positions

Hourly rates vary widely, depending on industry. According to a survey by American Staffing Association, the average hourly wage is $17, but can go up to $100 an hour.

Even jobs that don't require college degrees can pay more than similar full-time positions.

Here are a few examples of those jobs with average hourly wages for temp positions, according to CareerBuilder.com:

- Maintenance and repair workers: $17.26 an hour
- Machinists: $19.07 an hour
- Construction laborers: $15.61 an hour
- Secretaries and administrative assistants: $15.89 an hour

**WHAT SEASONAL TRENDS CAN WE EXPECT?**

Different industries experience seasonal spikes in their demand for temporary labor. The holiday season sees a big boost in retail, transportation, manufacturing and fulfillment as stores boost the number of their employees for the last months of the year.

According to the National Retail Federation, between 640,000 and 690,000 seasonal workers are expected to be hired in retail, with even more in shipping, manufacturing and fulfillment.
Outdoor recreational facilities, such as ski resorts, ice skating rinks and other facilities, also bring on temporary help each year.

While the holidays may see the biggest increase in temporary employment, the summer also sees an increase in temp jobs. Amusement parks, golf courses, summer nannies and childcare workers are all positions that see more interest in the summer.

And for workers who are looking for employment from January to April, consider working in tax services. Companies are looking for everyone from CPAs to administrative assistants to get them through the busy season, according to Monster.com.

**USING TEMP WORK TO BOOST YOUR EARNINGS LONG-TERM**

While working as a temporary worker is often a great way to boost your current paycheck, many workers find that short-term or contract work can offer other benefits like opening new doors for their career. About 63% of companies are planning to hire some temporary workers into full-time positions this year, up from 58% last year, according to CareerBuilder.

According to a study by American Staffing Association, 35% of temporary workers surveyed said they received an offer of a permanent job after an assignment and 66% of those workers accepted the job offer.

Even if they didn't receive a job offer, 90% of the workers surveyed said their staffing work made them more employable. Whether it's the opportunity to work on a major project or build new skills, temporary work can help strengthen resumes and show future employers that they're serious about building their skill sets.
It’s also a great way for employees to see how their personality, skill set and work style will mesh with a potential employer. Many people may be afraid to move from a job where they’re established to try out a new job or industry. Working with a staffing agency makes the transition smoother, with the staffing agency working to find a good fit for both employee and employer.

It also offers a valuable way to network with other people in your field. Even if that company doesn’t offer a full-time position, you never know when those contacts you make can lead to a job down the road, according to an article from U.S. News.

For workers that have been laid off, temporary work can help fill the gaps as they seek out new jobs and make sure that their resume doesn’t have long periods of unemployment in it, according to U.S. News.

For employees who want a bit more stability in their temporary employment, they can consider signing up for contract work. Lasting anywhere from a month or two to six months, contract positions give temporary workers a set amount of time where they know they’ll be employed and exactly how much they’ll be making.

Take control of your career and consider temporary or contract work as a way to boost your earnings and improve your skills. Contract positions offer a great way to earn more money, providing a better future for yourself. Working with a staffing agency will help find the best opportunities for growth in your career, while taking into account your own specific personality, skills and goals.