



City Staffing 10 Tips for Successful Freelancing

211 W. Wacker Dr. Suite 700, Chicago, IL 60606

Phone (312) 346-3400 . Fax (312) 346-5200 . TIMESHEET Fax (562) 316-1991

The freelancing marketplace is getting very crowded. While more companies are using outsourced professionals, there are also more highly qualified people available to do the interim work. This is all part of the permanent change in how businesses organize to maintain a competitive edge. Staffing flexibility is key.

How do you succeed in this kind of world? Professionals – senior marketing executives and Mac production artists alike – know it is often the intangibles that contribute most to a successful career as an independent professional. A great resume, talent, and technical skills are not the only factors. Clients expect performance levels and demeanor from their interim and freelance workers that conform to the same high standards set for their core, permanent staff.

Though you probably already practice the tips that follow, we can confirm from our own experience how important they are. When you're on a City Staffing assignment, remember:

I. Be Punctual

- If you are traveling to an assignment, leave time to accommodate heavy traffic and slow trains.
- Better to arrive early and sit in a coffee shop.
- Call City Staffing if you are arriving late, we will call the client.
- Cell phones come in very handy here!

II. Be A Contributor

- Think of yourself as part of a team, whether you complete your assignment from a home office or at the client's location.
- Look for opportunities that will enhance your value to the client.
- Be helpful and pro-active, ask for things to do when there is downtime.
- If you are a marketing professional on a 4-month interim management assignment, pitch in when you can with new ideas that reflect your experience and expertise for which you were hired.

III. Ask Questions

- Always ask for an early-on assessment of the direction and content of the work you are doing.
- Clarifying and confirming direction early keeps you on track from the beginning.
- Ask about things you are not sure of, even if they seem trivial.
- Small things can impact your productivity too.

IV. Positive Attitude

- A positive view of yourself and your work will definitely contribute to success.
- Smile and be friendly to your supervisor and the people you work with.
- Talent and credentials can be quickly forgotten in the face of an unpleasant or temperamental demeanor.

V. Stay In Touch

- Invest in a cell phone.
- We need to be able to reach you via a dependable system.
- Pick up your messages and return calls promptly, if it is always difficult to reach you, or get a call returned, we may stop trying.
- If you are on an assignment, check your messages during your breaks and lunch hour.
- Be sure to let us know the method that is best to reach you, cell phone or email.

VI. Confirm Expectations

- We want you to advise us immediately if you are asked by the client to change the nature or level of work that you are doing once the job starts.
- If your job responsibilities change, we want to make sure you are compensated for the change.
- When working with your own clients, it's always good to confirm, in writing if possible, exactly what it is you are contracting to do and at what pay rate you are agreeing to do it. Once you get started, if the client ask you to do work that is significantly different (and which could be billed at a different rate), then you have a document which you can refer to when re-opening your rate discussion.

VII. Be Realistic

- When you are accepting an assignment with City Staffing, be realistic about timetables, and about the skills and abilities which are required for the job.
- If you commit to the job, you will be expected to start on time and finish the assignment.
- Happy clients almost always repeat orders because you have given them more than they expected.
- Disappointment and lots of one-time, no-repeat jobs result when you promise more than you deliver.

VIII. Market Your Enthusiasm

- Simple things mean a lot.
- Many City Staffing Associates who are successful, update us with letters, newsletters, resumes, telling us about their recent assignments.
- Temp work is now perfectly credible resume material, so don't end your resume at your last permanent staff position.
- If you have a home office, consider getting software that schedules and reminds you to make cold calls and follow-up calls every day. Even if you have to leave a voice mail message, your clients will know you're on top of things, and ready to work.

IX. Dress The Part

- We know the norms of acceptable business dress change all the time.
- Always better to fit in with dress, whether pin stripe or casual.
- If you work mostly from your home office, it is still sensible to assume appropriate business attire when you see your clients.
- We consider suits and dresses “business professional”.
- Business casual would be khakis and a button down shirt or polo.
- Casual, jeans on Friday!
- Hint: Always dress for the position that you want.
- Be sure to ask what the dress code is before you begin your assignment.

X. The Honor Code Applies

- If accepting work through City Staffing makes sense for you, you need to adhere to two basic tenets of this kind of relationship:
 1. Do not discuss or negotiate your rate directly with the client and,
 2. Do not contact or contract with the client directly for additional work. Pretty simple.
- Should the client broach either of these topics, ask them to call the City Staffing office and speak to their client service or resource manager so any questions on rates or additional work can be answered.
- All of this is part of the City Staffing Conditions of Employment you signed, and should have been covered during your interview. City Staffing clients are required to sign a similar agreement with identical terms.

There it is, all pretty obvious but worth reviewing even for the most seasoned temp. Though the business world is changing dramatically, one thing remains constant. Your clients and City Staffing want you to succeed. They choose you, among many, because they need and appreciate the expertise you bring to each assignment.

Feel good about that, relax and enjoy your work. It will show.