

Working for an agency

Below are some tips on how to obtain a vacancy through an agency.

Contact

1. The first step to working for an agency is to identify which agency caters for the kind of jobs that you are looking for. There are hundreds of agencies out there many of which specialise in certain job markets.
2. It is an idea to register with more than one agency – that way you have more than one agency looking for work for you.
3. Once you have decided which agencies you want to register with, you need to make contact. First impressions are important – be prepared that you may get asked questions about what work you are looking for, why you want to do it and what qualifications/experience you hold.
4. If you are invited to an interview, make sure you can definitely make that date. If you know prior to the date that you cannot make it, let the agency know(s) as no-shows do not create a good impression.

The interview

1. This is a proper interview! Treat it as such – dress appropriately, prepare yourself as you would for a normal interview and bring everything that you are asked to.
2. One good way to think about it is that the person that is interviewing you has only this allotted time to make an impression of you, to see what kind of role you would be suited for. So just like an ordinary interview, they will make an impression of you and see if you are suitable for the job.
3. Answer all the questions as you would for any other job and try to give examples for each answer.
4. Make the interviewer aware of exactly the kind of work you are looking for, when you are available to work, and where you would be happy to travel to.
5. Often for agencies you are asked to bring items with you to your interview such as an up to date CV, proof of ID, proof of address etc. If you have forgotten or there is a reason for not bringing something, advise of this at the start of the interview and the reasons why.
6. If you have been asked to fill in an application form to bring along with you to your interview, do not leave blank spaces or write 'see CV'. Fill it in fully and if you are not sure on any parts, ask at the start of the interview or even call up before your interview date to ask.
7. After the interview, thank the interviewer for their time and ask their agency protocol on what happens next. For example, when can they send you out to work, is there anything additional you can do to help to speed the process of being registered. One way you could help is to contact your referees to ask if they are happy to provide you with a reference, and if they are, advise them where the reference request will be coming from.

Keeping in contact

1. Keep in touch with agencies to let them know when you are available for work. For example if you have prior commitments or are doing some work for another agency, it is polite to let them know.
2. It is good to remind them that you are ready and able to work. Agencies see so many candidates every day that it is good to keep yourself in the forefront of their minds. You can then ask what work is available – you can ask that your CV goes forward if you have seen a job advertise on their website.
3. If you are registered with an agency for temporary work as well as them looking for permanent positions for you, and you are registered for some time, it is an idea to email them updated versions of your CV and ask them for hints on making your CV better.